



55 Silent Auction Items that Win Big Bids

Without further ado, let's get into those silent auction item ideas!

COVID-conscious silent auction items

Rent a Restaurant: Many people miss these kinds of opportunities since COVID-19 closed many restaurants and other businesses. Partner with some of the popular local restaurants about offering a specific room or the whole restaurant to rent for a safe, socially distanced dining experience.

Getaway for two: Whether it's a condo by the sea or a cabin in the woods, we can all agree we need a break from the four walls of our own homes or apartments. Take advantage of people's cabin-fever by putting a socially-distanced weekend away up for auction. If you've also got a dinner or wine and cheese basket up for auction, be sure to point out that nothing goes better with a weekend away than a nice bottle of wine or special dinner to cook.

Private boat cruise with cocktails: This one is more geographic-specific, but if you live near a waterway, ask a local cruise company (or even the owner of a luxury yacht) to give a cruise and cocktail experience. It doesn't need to be a long experience, even a two or three hour cruise is an exciting prospect for people who spent most of the winter trapped inside.

Meal delivery service gift cards: Meal delivery services [grew in popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), especially as grocery stores saw long lines, inconvenient safety protocols, and empty shelves from time to time. Plus, many people turned to these kits to get into cooking for the first time or to avoid the stress of planning meals. Take advantage of this boom by auctioning off gift cards for popular meal delivery services.

Travel-related silent auction items

For any travel related prizes, consider extending the validity for prize redemption or activation. This way guests who may not be completely comfortable with traveling can still get excited about that weekend escape after the COVID-19 travel restrictions are over.

Luggage set: Many people were forced to postpone their travel and vacation plans in 2020. They're eagerly awaiting opportunities to get back to adventures and holidays near and far. Who doesn't need a new luggage set to jet off to their post-pandemic getaway!

Airline miles or AirBnb credits: Gift airline miles or AirBnb credits that the winner can use for the trip of their choice. This is an attractive option because of the flexibility in destination and timing.

Local getaway: partner with a local resort or getaway destination to offer a free night or two. This will be an extra-popular item for people who want to have a vacation experience but might not feel comfortable with long-distance travel.

Out of town getaway: Do you live within a reasonable distance of a popular resort or vacation location? Think about ski resorts, luxury hotels, adventure parks, and other vacation destinations.

Offer a getaway weekend or few days at some of these popular locations so people can get excited about a post-COVID vacation. These will become extra popular as these getaway destinations fill up with eager adventurers who are desperate to get away.

International trip: Depending on pandemic travel restrictions, this auction item may feel a bit risky. One way to reduce the risk is to ensure there's a big window to use the certificates so people can take the trip when they feel safe and when travel regulations allow.

Experiences make great silent auction items

Even in normal times, experiences make excellent silent auction items because people typically gravitate toward things they can do or enjoy rather than items to fill their homes. Here are some experiences that remain popular and traditionally bring in bigger bids at charity auctions.

Paint night: Partner with a local [Wine and Design](#) or similar company to auction off a private paint experience.

Spa or salon day: Who doesn't want a full-service day of pampering, relaxation, and stress relief? Or partner with a local salon for a full makeover and haircut experience.

Amusement park admission: A day of fun, adventure, and memory-making with friends or family. To take this auction item to the next level, throw in some coupons for a meal in the park or some park swag.

Comedy club night: Auction off tickets to a comedy club and throw in tokens to cover the first round of drinks or the first appetizer!

Tickets to a local play or concert: Support the local arts by auctioning tickets to an upcoming play or concert. Many of these events will likely sell out quickly when things begin to return to normal after the pandemic. So, this may become an even hotter ticket at your auction!

For a bigger ticket or experience option offer tickets to a Broadway show, NY fashion week, etc.

Sports experiences and items for silent auctions

People love sports and these auction ideas are especially popular if your local or regional pro teams are doing well or have a strong fan-following. Here are some of the most popular sports related silent auction items that tend to bring in notable bids.

Tickets to a professional or minor league sporting event: Who doesn't love an afternoon at the ballpark or stadium, cheering on the home team!

Team memorabilia: reach out to your local or regional professional teams and ask for some autographed memorabilia. Or, if there is a very well-known sports figure connected to your area, reach out and ask for autographed items for your auction.

Catered tailgate party: This works for college, semi-professional, or pro sports teams. Really, this auction item will be popular anywhere tailgating and pre-game parties are popular.

Sporting goods and adventure experiences: Many nonprofits enjoyed fundraising success auctioning off adventure and sports experiences, too!

- White water rafting
- Zip line experience
- Time at an indoor driving range
- Vouchers for the indoor trampoline park, rock climbing gym, Top Golf, or similar sports experiences
- High end sporting goods (golf clubs, skis, etc.)

Silent auction items for music-lovers

Think outside the box to draw in the music-lovers in your auction audience. Here are some of the music-related items that traditionally perform well at auctions.

- Concert tickets
- Meet-and-greets/VIP Access/Backstage access
- Vinyl records or custom merchandise
- Autographed items
- Gift card to [Ticketmaster](#) so bidders can attend the concert or experience of their choice

Auction items for foodies

Who doesn't love to try new food and drink or experience that hot restaurant that's impossible to get into? Offer a few auction items that speak to the foodies in your crowd! Here are a few of the most popular food-related silent auction items.

- Wine tree: bonus points if the wine is from local wineries
- Tea party at a botanical garden
- Restaurant gift cards
- Brewery or winery tour and tasting

Classes and learning experiences to auction off

The pandemic prompted a rise in interest in DIY experiences, cooking, crafting, and loads of other hobbies and interests. Take advantage of this new interest in learning new skills by auctioning off classes and learning opportunities.

- Cooking class
- Yoga or pilates class
- Pottery or paint class
- Woodworking class

Gift cards for silent auctions

When all else fails, gift cards and certificates generally do well at charity auctions because people are willing to support their favorite charity while making purchases they might normally make (everyone wins).

- Beauty stores
- Amazon prime for a year
- Local brick and mortar stores
- Movies ([VUDU](#), [Fandango](#), etc)
- Grocery store gift card
- Cold hard VISA cash!

Charity auction gift basket ideas

Gift baskets are still very popular auction items. People love themed baskets that are packed with all kinds of goodies (and a few surprises at the bottom never hurts). Here are some ideas for gift basket themes.

Spa Day: Bubble bath, bath salts or bombs, scented votive candles, high-end lotion, nail care set, spa and massage gift card

Snow day: Cozy house socks, cuddly blanket, 2 mugs, hot chocolate mixes and some cinnamon sticks, movie or bookstore giftcard, marshmallows, chocolates, cookies, and other snacks

Movie night: A couple movies (gift card to [VUDU](#) or [Redbox](#)), popcorn, boxed candy, and a few sodas

Date night: Wine, wine glasses, cheese, crackers, canned dip, cured sausage, jarred hors d'oeuvres, chocolates, a deck of [conversation cards](#), movie gift cards or tickets to a local show. [These are pretty popular](#) so it might be a good idea to make more than one themed date night basket for your next charity auction

Coffee Lover's Dream: Brewing equipment (french press, pour over set, etc), a couple bags of local or high-end roasted coffee, 2 mugs or travel tumbler, coffee shop gift card, coffee chocolate, cookies or biscotti

Traveler's Delight: Carry on bag, noise canceling headphones, neck pillow, magazine subscription, pen and traveler's notebook, passport case, sleep mask

Craft Beer Night: 24 or 36 unique bottles of craft beer from different breweries, maybe a voucher to the local pub, different nut mixes or other bar snacks, beer glasses

Death by Chocolate: Chocolate bars, truffles, chocolate covered coffee beans, nuts and fruits, brownie mix, a wine to pair, and a giftcard to the local chocolatier or bakery near you

Gourmand: Grocery gift card, several bottles of spice mixes, jams, recipe book, finishing salts

Christmas Came Early: Online shopping gift cards, a few toys for the kids, a board game, wrapping paper and bows, a festive candle, small Christmas decorations, hot chocolate mix, Christmas cookie mixes