



Taste It All

ROGUE WINTERFEST SHOWCASES THE AREA'S BEST EATS

words by *Caleb Nyberg*

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The holiday season finds many Americans putting up sparkling lights and pine trees, decorating their houses and shopping for gifts. In most cities, the festivities reach beyond individual houses and neighborhoods to a community-wide celebration. Rogue Winterfest '09 in Grants Pass is one of Southern Oregon's most glittering examples of this seasonal tradition

Started in 2003 as the Grants Pass Festival of Trees, Rogue Winterfest is now the largest of its kind in Josephine County. Each year[hundreds of volunteers, artists and businesses, joined by thousands of participants, celebrate the spirit of giving. Since 2006, the festival has partnered with Three Rivers Hospital to raise money for Josephine County mental health organizations, which serve over 5,000 people.

Rogue Winterfest '09 will be held Dec. 5-8, in a new, larger Grants Pass venue: Evergreen Federal Bank's Bear Hotel. Open to the public, the festival is comprised of three events: a Public Preview Weekend (Dec. 5 and 6), the Culinary & Wine Pairing Christmas Classic (Dec. 7) and the Gala Event and Auction (Dec. 8).

"It is an amazing event that showcases incredible local art, beautifully designed trees and holiday displays and offers family activities for the whole community to enjoy," says Sue Price, coordinator of the festival.

To be sure, local art is a large part of the celebration, serving as the main attraction during both the Public Preview and Gala Event and Auction, and as backdrop at the Culinary Christmas & Silent Auction.

But there is another common theme that runs throughout the festivities: fabulous food!

Rogue Winterfest '09 is slated to be one of the state's largest gatherings of Southern Oregon's culinary and wine talents.. Chefs, confectioners, winemakers and brewers will come from all over

the region to participate in the Culinary & Wine Pairing Christmas Classic.

"This year we will be highlighting Applegate Valley wines patted with Rogue Valley restaurants, caterers and culinary artisans," says Price. "Each restaurant provides two signature items, appetizer and/or dessert."

Taste buds will be tempted by Gala Event and Auction sponsor" TapRock Northwest Grill, Miranda Mae Cafe, The Brewery Restaurant, Cary's of Oregon, R-Haus, Blondles' Bistro, Dagoba Organic Chocolate, The Rogue Creamery, Rising Sun Farms, Goodness Gracious Catering, Star Catering and Aroma Cafe Gourmet Catering and Wine Tasting.

"We are very excited to be part of yet another great community event," says Terry Hopkins, General Manager of TapRock Northwest Grill. "We will be a major sponsor for this year's event and will be proud to represent a sampling of our menu, offering fresh seasonal ingredients sourced from local farmers and vendors from the great Northwest."

Beverages will be provided by Wild River Brewing and Pizza Company, EdenVale Winery and the Applegate Valley Vintners Association.

Josephine County residents, and visitors are sure to experience an excellent sampling of the region's culinary wares, from fresh and savory Northwest-style cuisine to artisan toffees and chocolates.

"Gourmet food, fine wine, great jazz, gorgeous setting, beautiful art and friendly company.. it doesn't get much better than that," sums up Price.

Sure to wow all the senses, Rogue Winterfest '09 is a gift to the community-wrapped up in appreciation for the fine things in life and filled with compassion for neighbors in need. ★

Rogue Winterfest '09

Dec. 5 and 6: Public Preview Weekend

Dec. 7: Culinary & Wine Pairing Christmas Classic

Dec. 8: Gala Event and Auction

Evergreen Federal Bank's Bear Hotel,
Grants Pass

www.RogueWinterfest.com