



THE BITE OF OREGON

LIFE TASTES BETTER HERE

Presented by
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AUTO HOME LIFE

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Portland, OR -- The Oregon wine industry is one of the good news stories during this otherwise down economy. In the past year the number of vineyards and wineries has increased. The number of cases sold has gone up. And most important, the total value of Oregon wines sold has seen a healthy increase over last year.

The state's reputation as a winemaking region has continued to grow thanks to the expanding number of local wineries making award-winning wines. The MIX Wine Pavilion at the 2011 Bite of Oregon is one of the few places this year where wine lovers will be able to sample the vintage of more than two dozen wineries--from many of Oregon's diverse growing regions--in one location.

The MIX Wine Pavilion will be located under the shade trees next to the Sysco's Oregon Chef Stage. Wine lovers can enjoy live music, a view of the Willamette River, meet the winemakers, and taste to their heart's content. The Bite will run August 12 - 14 in Portland's Waterfront Park.

The judging of wines served at The Bite took place July 23 at the Pacific Northwest Wine Club in Tigard. Nine category winners were selected from over 86 wines submitted and will be highlighted at The Bite with gold medal status. The Pacific NW Wine Club not only hosts the Bite Wine Pavilion but is recognized as the nation's premier wine club dedicated the exploration and enjoyment of wines from the Northwest.

Figures from the U.S. Department of Agriculture show that over the past year the Oregon wine industry grew by more than a dozen new vineyards, forty new wineries, and more than a thousand acre increase in planted grapes. What the figures can't show are the younger wineries that

have continued to improve and are now winning awards and establishing names for themselves and building national awareness of the region.

One of these young wineries making its first appearance at The Bite's MIX Wine Pavilion is Ghost Hill Cellars, located near Carlton. The name has a great story behind it. In the 1860s a successful miner was passing through the area on his way to Portland with his hard-earned gold. With nightfall coming, he decided to camp near the top of the hill. Unfortunately, he never saw the morning. During the night, someone murdered the miner, killed his horse, and made off with the gold. To this day, the miner is said to wander Ghost Hill looking for his gold.

Nobody knows his identity. But Mike Bayliss, who owns Ghost Hill Cellars along with several family members, says that the story was attested to by several neighbors who were long-time residents in the area. But what is known is that the winery, which produced its first bottling in 2006, makes excellent wine. For example, their 2009 Pinot Noir won double Gold at the Oregon Wine Awards.

Ghost Hill Cellars is a small, artisan winery which will produce about 1,000 cases this year, all of it from grapes grown on land the Bayliss family has owned for more than a century.

Bayliss says that they are excited and honored to be chosen for The Bite and look forward to introducing many more people to the legend and their wines.

Entry to the MIX Wine Pavilion is included with admission to The Bite. Visitors can purchase wine by the glass, bottle and/or case directly from the wineries. Bite commemorative wine glasses are also available for purchase. The event is produced by Special Olympics Oregon with all net proceeds benefiting their programs providing sports training and athletic competition for persons with intellectual disabilities.

For wine lovers looking for that good value, The Bite MIX Wine Pavilion will not only be an economical way to sample outstanding wines, but having so many well known winemakers in one place makes it a relaxing and educational experience.

From Hood River to Jacksonville and up and down the Willamette, Rogue and Umpqua valleys, wineries representing Oregon's viticulture regions are nestled under the cool shade of trees in the MIX Wine Pavilion. A complete list of participating wineries can be found at www.biteoforegon.com.

The Bite of Oregon, burst onto the Portland event scene in 1984, and has introduced hundreds of the latest dishes from new and well-known restaurants, helped establish the popularity of the Oregon wine industry, and, most importantly, has raised needed dollars for Special Olympics Oregon. This year, Special Olympics Oregon encourages food, beverage and fun lovers to come and enjoy this always-improving Oregon summer tradition!

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