

MEDIA RELEASE

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BC wine industry gathers for skiing, food, wine and laughs at second annual Winemakers Cup

Oliver, B.C. – Skiing and wine are a great pairing -- if they're done in that order, not together -- and this weekend's Winemakers Cup at Mount Baldy near Oliver, BC, proves that they are a match made in ski heaven.

Close to a hundred winemakers, cellar hands and vineyard managers, tasting room staff, restaurateurs, sommeliers and many other industry people will be participating in various events at and near Mount Baldy, located in the heart of the Okanagan, one of the world's most scenic and beautiful wine regions. It's a weekend of skiing, wine, food and fun for anyone who wants to participate. Full video from the race at: <http://www.paulcottonfilms.com/WinemakersCup.php>

It's also the only annual event of its kind in North America, and possibly the world, says organizer Glenn Fawcett, president of Black Hills Estate Winery. "We're lucky in the Okanagan. We're not only blessed with unique winemaking terrior, but we are the only region to have a ski area such as Mount Baldy in very close proximity to the vineyards," he says. "Making wine is hard work, and it's good for all of us to get away from the grind and get together for some friendly ski competition, marked mostly by laughs. Last year's race was won by Bill Eggert, owner and winemaker of Fairview Cellars, by the narrowest of margins. Tom DiBello, winemaker at CedarCreek Estate Winery, has let it be known to the other racers that his victory this year is a near-guarantee. It's just a lot of fun to get the industry together for some laughs. And of course, you don't have to be in the wine industry to come out for these events. Everyone is welcome."

Fawcett says it's also a chance to for the industry to connect and share ideas. "Some of the most interesting conversations happen on a chairlift, up there in the fresh mountain air. The Winemakers Cup is a great catalyst for these conversations. It enables an exchange of ideas and information that outside of the day-to-day work environment in the wineries and vineyards," he says.

This year's events are as follows:

- The fun starts with a Wine Rave at Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort & Spa on Friday, March 6 at 7pm. A bottle of your favourite wine gets you in the door, and guarantees that you'll taste some of the best wines the region produces. There's also music and wine-country appetizers from Passatempo Restaurant. Tickets are \$25.
- The Winemakers Cup race takes place Saturday, March 7 beginning at 11am at Mount Baldy. A full race package, including lift ticket, race registration, barbeque lunch and t-shirt, is \$65.
- The race is followed by a barbeque lunch beginning at 1pm. Tickets are \$35.
- Saturday evening, March 7, is highlighted by the Dueling Chefs' Wine-paired Dinner beginning at 7pm. Passatempo owner/chef Brad Lazarenko and guest celebrity chef Ned Bell will host a multi-course dinner paired with wines and pairing commentary from winemakers at Black Hills Estate Winery, Twisted Tree

Vineyard Winery, La Stella Winery, Jackson-Triggs Okanagan, Inniskillin Okanagan Vineyards and Forbidden Fruit Winery. Tickets are \$80. The dinner includes the Winemakers Cup awards ceremony, where the tall tales from the slopes are told.

For tickets, call Katrina at (250) 495-5445, ext. 5003. If you're interested in the race, spots are available right up to race day. For further information on the Winemakers Cup, go to spiritride.ca/race. For information on Mount Baldy Ski Area, go to skibaldy.com.

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