

Beaujolais Nouveau Bonheur

Though I don't particularly crave the raw, tart wine known as Beaujolais Nouveau, each year I look forward to celebrating its release at the Heathman Hotel's incredible wine and food festival. The eighth annual fête and wine auction, a fundraiser for the French-American Chamber of Commerce and the Alliance Française of Portland, will be on Friday, November 20 at 6:00pm. One day prior is the third Thursday of November—the traditional Beaujolais Nouveau release date—and cases upon cases of this year's Beaujolais wine will be flown to Portland from France to arrive just in time for the party. The wine is harvested just weeks before.

After walking through the hotel's elegant tea court then up the grand staircase to the second floor, it's as if you are transported to Paris. Five hundred revelers toast the year's vintage with wine, food, and live music.

Flowing from room to room, buffets filled with French delicacies are fit for Mary Antoinette, with artisanal cheeses, soaring platters of chilled seafood, chefs carving cuts from a whole roasted pig, crepes Suzette cooked-to-order, and, of course, foie gras. The feast is presented by the hotel's Culinary Director, James Beard Award-winning Chef Philippe Boulot. Several wine stations are interspersed, pouring Beaujolais Nouveau from French vintners Georges Duboeuf, Joseph Drouhin, and Terres Dorées. Also wines of a more mature quality are offered from Oregon wineries like Amity Vineyards, WillaKenzie Estate, and Soléna Cellars.

According to Chef Boulot, "the traditional custom of celebrating Beaujolais Nouveau has become a popular event in our community, and Portland's celebration is one of the largest in the country."

Beaujolais Nouveau Celebration

The Heathman Hotel

Friday, November 20, 2009 at 6:00pm

Learn more by visiting www.afportland.org.