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Romance Your Valentine in the Columbia Gorge
Wine and Dine for the holiday weekend

Hood River, Oregon, January 20, 2010 – Known as an extreme sports Mecca, the Columbia Gorge is proving to be a source for different kinds of thrills when the wind isn't blowing. Valentine's Day Weekend is a perfect time to explore the indoor delights that the area has to offer. Wine touring, chocolate tasting, seasonal dining combined with a wide variety of lodging options make the communities nestled on both sides of the Columbia River great destinations for romance and relaxation.

"The Gorge is known throughout the world as a wedding destination and is the perfect place for a romantic getaway anytime time of the year," said Hood River County Chamber Marketing Coordinator Jamel Badrieh. "We are encouraging visitors to stay the weekend to truly take in the scenic beauty of the Gorge; to enjoy our many attractions - wonderful wineries, charming lodging facilities, top-rate restaurants, historic downtowns, art, shopping, year-round recreation, spas and so much more."

The wineries of the Columbia Gorge will be holding open houses – providing special opportunities for pairing wine with chocolates and cheeses, as well as barrel tastings and new releases. There are around thirty tasting rooms in the Gorge, spanning about 40 miles from Hood River, OR to Goldendale, WA and they showcase the world of wines that are grown and made in the region. "Guests are amazed at the variety and quality of wines being made in the Gorge," comments Autumn Woods, Marketing Coordinator for the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association. "They also remark on the lack of crowds and traffic and the scenic drive from the Portland/Vancouver area. It's great to see folks 'discover' our wine region for the first time."

For the Food and Beer lovers, the local breweries and restaurants will be featuring specials for the weekend as well. Full Sail Brewing will be participating in "Zwicklemania," a promotion by the Oregon Brewers' Guild and will feature complimentary tours and their new Brewer's Share Beer "Collin's Dark Secret" paired with artisan chocolate. Local restaurants will also be featuring specials and full menu choices. "Celilo will be open all weekend, offering full menu and also some specials. We

like to give people a lot of choices - both for appetites and budgets,” says Jacqueline Carey of Celilo Restaurant and Bar. Across the river, in Bingen, WA at Solstice Wood Fire Café, a special “Aphrodisiac Menu” is being planned along with live music on Saturday and Sunday and in-house baby sitting. A selection of fair trade chocolates and ‘Chocolate Decadence’ will also be featured.

Lodging options in the Columbia Gorge vary from grand elegance to modern retro to cozy comfort. The Columbia Gorge Hotel, Hood River, Oregon and Bonneville Hot Springs Resort and Spa, North Bonneville, WA each offer complete packages for romance in elegant style. Newly renovated, the Celilo Inn in The Dalles, OR provides views from the bluff above the Columbia River and is a great starting point for wine touring in the Eastern end of the Gorge. Members of the Columbia Gorge Bed and Breakfast Association have special packages featuring local wines and multi night stay discounts throughout the area. The Historic Balch Hotel, Dufur, Oregon will be featuring weekend packages including a four course dinner and entertainment.

A complete list of events and contact information is available on the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers’ website: www.columbiagorgewine.com. The listings include tasting room hours, special offers, live music schedules as well as lodging and dining recommendations. For additional travel information, links to the local visitors’ associations are also available. Questions can also be directed to Autumn Woods, Marketing Coordinator, Columbia Gorge Winegrowers via email at info@columbiagorgewine.com and by phone at 866-413-9463.

The Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association is a nonprofit trade association of local wineries, grape growers, and wine-related businesses from the Columbia Gorge and Columbia Valley Appellations. Together, the 60+ members of the association promote the award- winning wines and grapes of the Columbia River Gorge region.

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