

Making the world a better place by raising a glass or two

Boost worthy causes by sipping philanthropically oriented wines and taking in wine-centric events

As the holidays approach, it's time to think about how we can help those who have a little less. We can volunteer. We can donate. And we can drink more wine.

The fact is, Oregon wineries tend to be so philanthropically minded that it's difficult to find a locally produced wine that doesn't somehow support a worthy cause. But here are some especially effective ways we can make the world a better place merely by swirling and sipping.

Compassionate parties

You can almost bet that any major nonprofit fundraiser in this state will include free sips of an Oregon wine that was donated in a gesture of good will. But November is a big month for wine-industry-driven charitable events. Here are a few fun opportunities to drink, be merry and feel altruistic all at the same time this month:

Salud: The Oregon Pinot Noir Auction, Nov. 7-8.

Seasonal migrant workers keep this nation's agricultural system running. Unfortunately, since these temporary employees move from farm to farm, they are not eligible for health care. Enter Salud, the only program of its kind in the nation. The pinot noir auction and black-tie dinner are fabulous opportunities to taste and purchase rare new releases of pinot noir. The event also funds Tuality Healthcare's pioneering programs that provide basic medical services to the needy workers who harvest grapes in Oregon before moving on to other crops in other states. Visit www.saludauction.org to learn more about the event, purchase tickets (\$395 — if there are any left!), make an absentee bid or contribute to the endowment.



KATHERINE COLE

WINE NOTES

Oregon Bounty Winemaker Dinner Series, Nov. 11-13

In a preview to the incredibly successful annual Classic Wines Auction (March 7), this series of winemaker dinners at top local restaurants raises funds to support local charities such as Metropolitan Family Services and Friends of the Children — Portland. To learn more and purchase tickets (\$150) for the autumn dinners, go to classicwinesauction.com.

The Northwest Food and Wine Festival, Nov. 15

For those with a smaller budget but an equally voracious appetite for wine, this Memorial Coliseum event (\$75-\$95) is a bargain. Sample the goods of a mind-boggling number of food and wine donors while supporting Camp Fire USA. For more: nwfoodandwinefestival.com.

Benevolent bottles

Many Oregon wineries donate proceeds to charitable causes.

Here are just a few examples of philanthropically oriented wines you can find on store shelves right now:

2006 Bob's African Western Cape South Africa Pinotage (\$10.50):

Portland-based wine importer Bob Lynde is passionate about two things: good wine and battling the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa. Although his well-crafted wines come from South Africa, his business is based here in Portland. The pinotage is a solid representation of South Africa's signature grape (a cross between pinot noir and cinsaut), with notes of red currants and chocolate. It's the kind of please-all-palates party wine that you'll want to stock up on for the holidays. (And if pinotage isn't your thing, try the shiraz, the cab-shiraz blend, the chardonnay or the sauvignon blanc.) And note that, in addition to the 10 percent of sales that already benefit international aid agencies, \$1 from each bottle sale will go to the local Cascade AIDS Project through the end of year.

Find it at City Market; Cornell Wine Company; E&R Wine Shop; Eastmoreland Market & Kitchen; Flying Elephant's Deli; Fred Meyer Hollywood West, Northwest Best, Raleigh Hills, Sunset, Tigard and Walker Road; Great Wine Buys; In Good Taste; John's Market Place; Lamb's Garden Home Thriftway Marketplace; any New Season's Market; Parallel 45; Pastaworks; Storyteller Wine Co.; Vino; Vino 100; Whole Foods Markets Fremont and Bridgeport; Wizer's Lake Grove Market and Oswego Foods; and Zupan's Belmont and Burnside.