

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## ‘Under the Stars’ Wine Festival arrives in Courtenay

Join NIC Tourism and Hospitality students ‘Under the Stars’ for a gala evening of wine, cheese, gourmet food and live entertainment this March at the ‘Under the Stars’ Wine Festival.

The festival takes place at the Florence Filberg Centre in Courtenay on March 23 from 7 to 9 pm. Proceeds support NIC Foundation student bursaries as well as students on international exchanges, as part of NIC’s study abroad program.

“This event is always a major highlight for students and the community,” said NIC Tourism and Hospitality program chair Deborah Forsyth. “It’s a great opportunity to get dressed up and sample amazing wine, beer and food, all while supporting students as they pursue their careers and apply the skills they learned in the classroom.”

The festival has been a mainstay of the North Island since 2002. This year marks its first appearance in the Comox Valley, following years of largely sold-out events in Campbell River.

NIC tourism and hospitality students organize the event under a different theme each year, bringing together wine and craft beer vendors, gourmet food for an enthusiastic crowd.

Guests will be able to sample from more than 150 delicious BC and international wines, as well as a wide assortment of craft beers. Local vineyards such as 40 Knots, Coastal Black and Beaufort Winery will be among more than 20 wine and craft beer vendors featuring their latest products.

Local caterers will serve gourmet hors d’oeuvres, complemented by cheeses from Natural Pastures Cheese Company in Courtenay and fresh seafood from Out Landish Shellfish Guild in Heriot Bay.

The evening will also feature wine and cheese seminars, live entertainment and a new blind wine tasting session.

The event provides invaluable experience to students in NIC’s [Convention & Special Events Management \(THM-203\)](#) course.

“It gives us the opportunity to use all of the skills we’ve learned during our time at college,” said second-year student Jody Comparelli. “We can explore curriculum in ways we might not otherwise be able to do.”

A shuttle service to Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland is available after the event to ensure guests arrive home safely.

Tickets are limited. They cost \$75 each and are available through the North Island College Bookstore or online at [www.nicwinefestival.eventbrite.ca](http://www.nicwinefestival.eventbrite.ca).

For more information on the Wine Festival or NIC’s Tourism and Hospitality program, visit [www.nic.bc.ca](http://www.nic.bc.ca).

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*NIC’s ‘Under the Stars’ Wine Festival arrives in Courtenay March 23. Guests will be able to sample delicious wine, craft beer and gourmet food. Tickets are on sale now, visit [www.nic.bc.ca](http://www.nic.bc.ca) for details.*