



**For Immediate Release
March 4, 2008**

**BRITISH COLUMBIA TAKES CENTRE STAGE
AT THE 2009 VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE
INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL**

Vancouver, BC... Tony Beatty, Vice-Chair of the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival Board, announced Saturday that British Columbia will be the theme region for the 2009 Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival.

Mr. Beatty made the announcement at Goldfish Pacific Kitchen during the BC Food & Wine: Our Land, Revealed lunch, an annual event at the Playhouse Wine Festival featuring British Columbia wine and cuisine.

"As Vancouver gears up to welcome the world to the 2010 Winter Olympics," says Mr. Beatty, "it's more important than ever that we showcase the very best that our province has to offer – and what better way than making British Columbia wine and cuisine the focus of the 2009 Wine Festival?"

"We're excited to partner with the Playhouse Wine Festival in 2009 and to share with Festival patrons the exciting developments in the BC wine industry," said Scott Fraser, Chair of the British Columbia Wine Institute. "The quality of British Columbia wines has increased dramatically over the last two decades and it's time for consumers and trade to see just how well our product stacks up against the rest of the wine world."

"This is an exciting opportunity for BC's wine industry and more importantly BC consumers. No other region can draw on the winery proprietors, winemakers, chefs and gourmet food producers like we can because they're in our backyard," says BC Wine Institute Executive Director Peggy Athans.

The Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival, Canada's premier wine show, runs from March 23-29, 2009. Playhouse Wine Festival is one of the biggest and oldest wine festival events in the world, with a total attendance reaching 25,000 at this year's 60 Festival events. In 2009, the global focus will be Pinots, a group of grape varieties that include Pinot noir, Pinot gris, Pinot blanc and Pinot meunier.

The hub of the Festival is the International Festival Tasting Room at the Vancouver Convention & Exhibition Centre where hundreds of wines are available for sampling at three public and two trade-only tasting sessions. The Festival features a week of special events including a gala auction, wine seminars, wine parties, winery dinners, lunches and brunches at fine local restaurants and hotels.

The Playhouse Wine Festival is produced by the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Society, which has three mandates: provide an informative, educational and entertaining wine experience for consumers and trade; be a premier marketing opportunity for the wine industry and festival partners; and raise funds for the Playhouse Theatre Company. Since its inception in 1979, the Festival has raised over \$6.4 million to enable Western Canada's leading theatre company to mount 203 productions and develop extensive community outreach and educational programs for school children.

For more information and complete festival details visit the website at www.playhousewinefest.com.

For more information about the British Columbia Wine Institute and its winery members, please visit www.winebc.com.

Contact:

Lisa Cameron
Communications Manager
BC Wine Institute
250.762.9744 ext. 103
lcameron@winebc.com
www.winebc.com

Maureen Verkaar
Publicist
Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival
604.328.5714
mvallstar@telus.net
www.playhousewinefest.com