

CITY



NICKI CORRIGALL, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

A mirror image. An ecstatic moment for Jacki Bird after she picks out her gown for the Viennese Winter Ball.

Cinderella nights: A primer

BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

Tuxedo and haute-couture shops will be busy this month. Ball season kicks off tonight with the Viennese Ball. Here's a primer with all you need to know about the big events.

THE VIENNESE WINTER BALL

THE SPOT: National Gallery of Canada.

THE DATE: Feb. 5.

THE LOOK: The venue provides all the ambiance one can imagine.

THE PRICE: \$350

THE CHARITY DOUGH: The event raises \$60,000 for the Thirteen Strings Orchestra and Champions for Children.

THE GRUB:

Starter — Maritime lobster and salmon rolls on caper berry bread, duck rillette with Saskatoon berries on country bread, marinated shrimp in rice paper with fresh basil, maple caribou terrine with cranberry chutney, and Stilton cheese and pears on potato and rosemary bread.

Main — Red deer loin with juniper berries "cocotte style," celery, roasted apple and Yukon mash with chestnuts, cranberry venison sauce.

Dessert — Compote of crisp chocolate fondant and Saskatoon berry crème brûlée.

THE LIQUID REFRESHMENTS: Champagne to kick things off, chocolate martinis in the Kaffee Haus, and Schottenmeister Zweigelt (2002), Schottenmeister Grüner Veltliner 2003.

THE LOOT: Ladies leave with a Swarovski crystal starfish pins, Van Houtte coffee, hand-crafted chocolates and dance lessons. Lads leave with National Gallery passes, leather coasters, and a bottle of wine.

THE ENTERTAINMENT: The Thirteen Strings Orchestra plays for the waltzing, as well as the traditional debutantes dance while the Schrammel Quartet play in the Kaffee Haus.

THE HIGHLIGHTS: Dinner and dancing takes place in the Great Hall. Non-waltzers can tour the galleries and take in the Kaffee Haus/martini bar. Each couple has a photo taken by Garlough Photography and many guests arrive in limousines.

THE HEAVY-HITTERS: Supreme Court Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin; Hungarian Ambassador Dénes Tomaj; Mayor Bob Chiarelli; and Mexican Ambassador Maria Teresa Garcia de Madero and her husband, Manuel.

THE SNOWFLAKE BALL

THE SPOT: The Congress Centre.

THE DATE: Feb. 12.

THE LOOK: White satin seat covers and tablecloths set the formal tone with snowflakes projected against frosty blue light throughout the ballroom of the Congress Centre. Organizers do what they can to pretty-up the utilitarian room.

THE PRICE: \$200 per ticket.

THE CHARITY DOUGH: Charities include the Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, and Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital for a national medical research project on Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis.

Last year, the ball raised upward of \$90,000 for the charities.

THE GRUB:

Starter — Ceviche of sea bass on marinated daikon with a fried lotus root fan.

Soup — Cream of fennel with herbed chantilly.

Palate — Apple granita.

Main — Medallion of Alberta beef tenderloin served with poached paupiette of dover sole "épinard" and roasted Ontario lamb loin trio, glazed with three sauces, served on a bed of purple sweet potato mousse, grilled green asparagus with red and golden bell pepper points.

Dessert — Rhapsody in white chocolate with wild blueberry and mango coulis.

THE LIQUID REFRESHMENTS: Cocktail reception includes martini bar, wine with dinner and a champagne toast before the live auction.

THE LOOT: Table gifts are perfume for the ladies and cologne for the men, from Guerlain, valued at \$60 each.

THE ENTERTAINMENT: The Anita Rossi Band play for dancing, while non-dancers can visit the silent auction tables.

THE HIGHLIGHTS: Unique and unusual auction items including trips, embassy dinners and a cruise.

THE HEAVY-HITTERS: Belgian Ambassador Daniel Leroy and his wife, Christine; Mexican Ambassador Maria Teresa Garcia de Madero and her husband, Manuel; Lawrence Greenspon and Margaret and Larry Dickenson.

THE VALENTINE BALL

THE SPOT: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

THE DATE: Feb. 14.

THE LOOK: The architectural wonder that is the "Great Hall" will be decked out entirely in white and red. Ice sculptures have graced the hall in previous years.

THE PRICE: \$300.

THE CHARITY DOUGH: Last year's event raised \$100,000 for the Canadian Postal Museum.

THE GRUB:

Starter — Jumbo shrimp and smoked peppercorn salmon served on a bed of lettuce and garnished with devilled egg, seafood sauce, and a lemon wedge.

Salad — Exotic greens, romaine and spinach salad, accented with goat cheese in a garlic phyllo, with cranberry chutney, sunflower seeds and slivered almonds and glazed with a raspberry vinaigrette.

Palate — Pink champagne granite.

Main — Grilled filet mignon with melted Brie cheese, dauphinoise potatoes seasoned to taste in a blend of rosemary and paprika, fresh snow peas and baby carrots and roasted red pepper with sesame seed honey glaze and a side of horseradish.

Dessert — Duo of Belgian crêpes with dark and white chocolate cream with red ribbon, topped with fresh berries, drizzled with a cinnamon cream Chantilly and a fresh cherry dipped in chocolate.

THE LIQUID REFRESHMENTS: Sparkling wine for the cocktail reception and wine with dinner, followed by liqueurs afterward.

THE LOOT: Each couple leaves with maple syrup, truffles and roses as well as an original Valentine Ball poster.

THE ENTERTAINMENT: Big Band Caravane with 20 musicians, two singers from Gatineau will play traditional dance music.

THE HIGHLIGHTS: Free parking and a late-night cheese buffet and digestifs bar.

THE HEAVY-HITTERS: MP Mauril and Catherine Bélanger; Heritage Minister Lizza Frulla; Canada Post president Anne Joynt, and Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Pettigrew.

BLACK & WHITE OPERA SOIRÉE

THE SPOT: National Arts Centre.

THE DATE: Feb. 19.

THE LOOK: The look will be elegant with a theme of "from Vienna to Broadway" that incorporates greenery, feathers, crystal and fur.

THE PRICE: Tickets for dinner, the show and a post-concert reception cost \$275, tickets to the show and post-concert reception cost \$175 and tickets to the show cost between \$55 and \$75.

THE CHARITY DOUGH: Last year's event raised \$250,000, which was split between Opera Lyra Ottawa and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

THE GRUB:

Starter — Grilled Long Island deep sea scallops with beluga lentils and red beet reduction.

Main — Medallion of veal with mushrooms from the Viennese forest, on crispy potato cakes, root vegetables.

Dessert — Tower of warm chocolate cake with raspberry compote.

THE LIQUID REFRESHMENTS: Kittling Ridge is the wine sponsor and wine is included in the ticket price. Other alcoholic beverages can be purchased.

THE LOOT: Bell Canada always gives a gift to the dinner participants. Last year, each couple received a wooden pepper mill.

THE ENTERTAINMENT: A concert hosted by Colm Feore with the National Arts Centre Orchestra under the direction of Jack Everly, with soprano Tracy Dahl, baritone Theodore Baerg, and tenor Chad Freeburg. The Opera Lyra Ottawa Chorus, under chorus-master Laurence Ewashko, also takes part.

THE HIGHLIGHTS: Guests to the post-concert reception get to meet the stars of the performance.

THE HEAVY-HITTERS: Lawson Hunter from Bell Canada; Mayor Bob Chiarelli; NAC donor Grant Burton; NAC president and CEO Peter Herndorf and board chairman David Leighton. Opera Lyra artistic director Michael Dobbins, high-tech mogul Michael Potter and grocery store magnate Ken Loeb will also be there.

Cavaliers

Fifteen young men, selected as special dancers for the Viennese Ball, have learned to waltz for the occasion



"My girlfriend got me to try out, but then she didn't get accepted; we don't even talk about it now."

Scott Babbitt



"The idea of going to the most glamorous event in Ottawa is something — to perform is something else."

Quinn Finney



"I am looking forward to getting all dressed up. I am afraid I will step on my partner's shoes again."

Andrew Edwardson



"I am kinda scared I'll get food on my tux — but it's not too big a deal. I'm just doing this for fun."

Tom Hamilton



"I'm having fun and have met a lot of new people. I just hope my hair co-operates with me."

Simon Hart



"At first I felt skeptical and like kinda a loser, and then I really got into it. I actually want to continue lessons."

Phil Jacobson



"I'm not the type of person who freaks out. So everything will be fine — even though my mom made me join."

Kon Kaindl



"I am looking forward to seeing all the important people and all the pretty girls in their pretty dresses."

Phil Kaindl



"I had no idea what to expect but am pleased with the chance to wear a tux. Any excuse to wear a tux."

Andrew Kelly



"I love performing in front of an audience. And it's great to learn how to sweep a girl off her feet."

Jonathan Koensgen



"Someone kicked me in rehearsal and I didn't realize it, so I fell. But I still think I am going to be amazing."

Nick Miragliotta



"I am really happy I got such a cool partner. Because she's fun to hang out with and she's gorgeous."

Nathan Ostroot



"Being a musician, it is exciting to be in such an environment. All the lights, glamour and pretty girls. It will be good."

Liam Parker



"Here's me — I guess I'm a 17-year-old punk — going to a ball with a bunch of classy people. It's kinda funny."

Harley Paterson



"I am excited I guess, a little nervous. Rehearsal is fun but a lot harder than I thought."

Daniel Taggart