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OTTAWA CITIZEN

Glittering nights: The Snowflake Ball and the Viennese Ball are a fun and romantic way to take the chill off winter

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The Viennese Ball is a night filled with magic and elegance that all began years ago in Vienna, Austria, where it has long been an annual tradition.

Viennese balls take place after New Year's and before the start of Lent. Today, it is celebrated around the world, including Ottawa where 350 guests will enjoy the 10th annual Viennese Ball on Saturday in the magnificent glass-enclosed Great Hall of the National Art Gallery.

Guest of honour is the ambassador of Austria, Otto Ditz, and his wife Maureen, who will participate in the opening ceremonies. Music will include everything from Beethoven's Ode to Joy to Mozart's classics (as this is 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth).

The evening opens with 30 specially chosen young ladies in long white evening dresses, and young gentlemen wearing smokings (dinner jackets), performing two classic Austrian dances: La Polonaise and The Landler.

The Mariazell region of Austria is a sponsor of the event and, in conjunction with Austrian Airlines, it will award two free tickets to Vienna to two of this year's lucky ball guests.

Executive chef Philippe Wettel of the Westin Ottawa hotel and his team will prepare dinner beginning with a variety of small hors d'oeuvres, including poached lobster medallion on profiterole with first-pressed olive oil and cod bandade, as well as five-spice Pekin duck crepe with cucumber. The main course presents slow-roasted, milk-fed veal tenderloin medallion with pan-fried duck foie gras; port-glazed caramelized shallots; and creamy diced celery root and apple gratin. The recipes appear on page B1 and below.

Dessert includes raspberry liqueur-marinated red fruit and vanilla miniature cake, and vanilla pod creme brulee topped with fresh berries. Later in the evening, guests will be treated to miniature sweets.

The ambassador has donated Austrian Gruner Veltliner and Zweigelt wines to enjoy with dinner.

Guests can wander down to the Water Court, where they can take in performances by the Schrammel Quartet while martinis are served in the foyer.

This magnificent event is sold out, but there is a waiting list. Contact Lee Knowles at 826-3705.

IMAGES



Bruno Schlumberger, The Ottawa Citizen
The spectacular Veal and Port Caramelized Shallots has been created for the Viennese Ball on Saturday at the National Gallery by chefs from the Westin Ottawa hotel. Recipe, page B2. **(FPinfomart: Allowed, Canada.com: Allowed)**



Bruno Schlumberger, The Ottawa Citizen
Austrian Ambassador Otto Ditz with one of the dishes that will be served at the Viennese Ball. **(FPinfomart: Allowed, Canada.com: Allowed)**