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INSIDERS // NAPA VALLEY, CA, USA: CELEBRATE IN WINE STYLE

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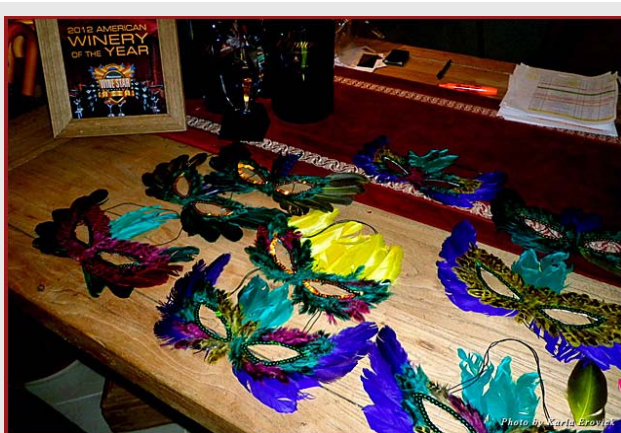
← San Francisco, CA, USA: Taste of Australia—It's the Wine!

### Napa Valley, CA, USA: Celebrate in Wine Style



Pouring champagne at Napa Gras

Ever wondered how the **Napa Valley** parties? With wine of course! Most of the time Napa is a casual place, but when they decide to celebrate they pull out all of the stops. I was lucky enough to attend a couple of high profile events to see for myself what goes on after the tourists go home.



Selection of masks at Raymond Vineyards' Napa Gras

Napa Gras, in celebration of Mardi Gras, was held at **Raymond Vineyards**. I was greeted by masked and costumed staff and given a choice of feather-adorned masks. Owner Jean Charles Boisset greeted me and posed for a photo, in addition to all of his other duties. As I wandered through the winery

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I found each room contained a distinct wine offering as well as tasty appetizers.



Partygoers in the Red Room

My favorite, the Red Room, is of course red and elegant with velvet, chandeliers, and leopard print. They were pouring JCB No. 21, a favorite bubbly that suited the glamour of the room. Seated on comfortable sofas, this was a great people watching venue, as well as a nice place for a conversation and a glass of wine.



Mardi Gras dancer struts her stuff

In the Crystal Cellar, music pulsed while scantily clad dancers in sequins and feathers sambaed on stage. A bountiful selection of seafood and sushi, cheese and charcuterie, and a myriad of other tasty treats awaited, including more JCB No. 21. During the evening a beautiful acrobat performed Cirque du Soleil feats while suspended from a dangling cloth. In her second act, she poured champagne for guests while suspended upside down—wow! Guests were encouraged to wander the winery among the barrel room, tasting areas, and outdoor grounds. The end of the evening came all too soon, as I retrieved my car and drove the short distance to my hotel.

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