



AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO  
SOCIÉTÉ ONTARIENNE DE LA SCLÉROSE LATÉRALE AMYOTROPHIQUE

## **WINE & CHEESE PARTIES**

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

The wine and cheese party is one of the more simple food-oriented events to organize because it requires no elaborate food preparations. Because you need not hire caterers or rent expensive facilities and equipment, it is possible to keep expenses for this event very low, especially when the wine and cheese is wholly or partially donated. Featuring a musician and perhaps a high profile guest speaker will considerably enhance attendance at this event.

### **RESOURCES REQUIRED:**

- A facility
- A sponsor or sponsors to donate wine & cheese and underwrite expenses
- A liquor license
- Music (harp, piano, classical duet)
- Special high profile guest speaker
- Volunteers to set up, take admission tickets, serve wine and cheese, and clean up
- A selection of wine, cheese, crackers, and other light refreshments (e.g. non-alcoholic beverages, fruit, etc.)
- Volunteers to sell admission tickets
- Wine glasses
- Cheese trays and cutters
- Napkins, toothpicks
- Plastic wrap
- Invitations, admission and beverage tickets
- Poster and/or flyers promoting event
- ALS banner, posters, and/or balloons
- Liability insurance

### **PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES:**

- Set date
- Book facility
- Apply for liquor license; also research other municipal and provincial regulations which may have an impact upon your event-this is especially important when your event involves alcohol
- Secure sponsor(s)
- Secure donations of wine, cheese, and other refreshments

**PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES-CON'T:**

- If you must purchase wine, ensure that you are able to return unopened bottles for a refund
- Recruit musicians; have their services donated if possible
- Recruit special guest speaker
- Recruit volunteers
- Finalize ticket price; admission should include unlimited food, but limited amounts of alcohol; additional wine tickets can be purchased at the event
- Compile mailing list; you may also be able to 'piggy-back" on to other organizations' mailings (e.g. wine fanciers, ethnic clubs, etc.)
- Print invitations, posters, flyers, and admission tickets
- Distribute tickets to volunteers for sale; also have volunteers distribute flyers and posters
- Mail invitations
- Record names and addresses of ticket buyers for mailing list
- Organize volunteer schedule for event day
- Rent wine glasses and purchase necessary supplies
- Discuss cold storage, table arrangements, etc. with facility manager
- Issue PSA and press release; follow up by phone; invite media to event
- Follow up with media, volunteers, facility, and musicians
- Ensure that wine, cheese, and supplies are delivered on schedule and that wine & cheese are properly stored before event

**EVENT ACTIVITIES:**

- Have a few volunteers arrive early to arrange wine and cheese tables and decorate facility
- Volunteers are stationed at reception to sell last-minute admission tickets; take advance tickets, and distribute liquor tickets
- Musicians provide subtle background music; it may be tied in with ethnic theme of evening if applicable
- Brief welcome and opening remarks; remember to thank volunteers and sponsors
- Volunteers pour wine but guests help themselves to food
- Break midway through the evening for brief speeches, award-presentations, draw for door prize, etc.
- Key figures in your Chapter, as well as high-profile sponsors and patrons, should be circulating throughout the evening to promote your Chapter and mingle with prospective volunteers and patrons

**POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES:**

- Wrap leftover food; give to volunteers or to local shelter or soup-kitchen
- Recycle empty wine bottles
- Save leftover supplies
- Wash wine glasses and return
- Send thank-you notes to volunteers, sponsors, and donors
- Issue press release announcing funds raised and thanking sponsors; follow up by phone
- Update mailing list
- Reconcile accounting

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS:**

- When looking for sponsors, contact ethnic clubs, wine-fanciers' associations, wineries, cheese distributors, delicatessens, etc.
- Create an ethnic theme for your event by featuring the wine and cheese of a particular country or ethnic group. Local ethnic clubs or associations in your community may be willing to collaborate.
- Promote your event to the wine industry, including wine-tasting groups and connoisseurs, trade organizations, wineries, and media. Try to "piggy-back" on to their mailings.
- To make your event stand out, deliver reminder press releases, together with individually wrapped cheese samples, to local radio D.J.s shortly before your event.
- Do not under-price your event; ensure that ticket prices cover all expenses and reflect the value of the event (remember, wine by the glass can be quite expensive!).
- This is the perfect kind of event to hold in conjunction with a special occasion, such as your Chapter's anniversary or the presentation of awards to volunteers and sponsors. You may also wish to offer door prizes, such as bottles of premium wine or wine and cheese baskets.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

The ALS Society of Ontario, 265 Yorkland Blvd., Suite 300, North York, Ontario.  
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