

Orangethewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

We have slid into June. The humidity is still low, which allows wild swings in temperature (not much thermal mass in dry air). It was a few years ago that we hit an all time record of 122 Fahrenheit degrees, which was off the charts for commercial aircraft. They had to wait until it cooled down to be able to calculate load factors and distance down the runway to lift off or whatever they need to know. I suspect the waiting passengers enjoyed a glass or two of rosé.

Field Trip to California

In what has become an annual tradition, I led a group of our top sales people to Napa, Sonoma and Amador Counties in California to visit some of the wineries we represent. It was a five day trip, but with 2 half days of traveling, it is really a four day trip. This is a major relationship building effort in which we learn about the hopes and dreams of the people at the small wineries we represent, and they learn who is representing them in Arizona. Every winery we represent has great people as well as great wines. Our job is to communicate the excitement of these places to our customers and to their customers. Unlike a "normal" wine tasting, we spend as much time as we can with the owners and winemakers to understand why they are making wine, how they got where they are and where they are headed. We also try to get a sense of how the average consumer is treated since we recommend tasting rooms to many of our customers and their customers. In the 4 days we visited 9 wineries, far less than a limo driven wine tasting tour, because our goals are somewhat different.

So thank you to Vine Cliff Winery, Frank Family Vineyards, Schweiger Vineyards and Winery, Miro Cellars, Tres Sabores, Salvestrin Winery, Fiddletown Cellars, Jeff Runquist Wines and Vino Noceto (chronological order) for their time and support of our field trip and of

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New Customers

[Blackstone Country Club](#)

12101 West Blackstone Drive
Peoria, AZ 85383
(623) 707.8700

[Grape Bistro](#)

23335 North Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
(480) 305-0907

[Lodge on the Desert](#)

306 North Alvernon Way
Tucson, AZ 85711
(520) 320-2000

[Rim Golf Club](#)

300 South Club House
Payson, AZ 85541
(928) 472-1470

Orangewood Wines.

My apologies to those wineries who feel missed out.
Next year we will try again.

Rambling

I know that you are all waiting with bated breath to hear how my attempt at a half marathon went. Well, OK, I'll tell you anyway. It was a rainy weekend, but the clouds parted for the race. I completed the course, running all the way except mile 10. I could still walk the mile back to the hotel afterwards. I came 4th in my age group. (Of course there were only 6 runners in my age group.) I also got to eat Chicago style pizza, drink beer and watch the Cubs score 13 runs against the Brewers.

On last week's trip to California, I was reminded what is compelling to me about the wine business - there are always lots of new things to learn. For example, this year at the Salvestrin Winery I saw some extra wedges on the bottom of a barrel. The reason was that this barrel had thinner staves. Knowing how expensive French oak barrels are, I jumped to the conclusion that this was a cost reduction, but I was wrong. The thinner staves allow more oxygen to seep through affecting how the wine evolves while it is in the barrel - and adding another degree of freedom to the winemaker. These barrels are actually more expensive. I still think that the thinner staves started as a cost reduction by the barrel makers, but marketing figured out how to present it as a product enhancement!

Learn something every day or you are falling behind.

The Rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

Richard (newsletter writer) and Laurie (editor)
Orangewood Wines

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