

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

It's half past August. The end of summer is tantalizingly close. In fact, it has been 70F at 5:00am in Cave Creek. We are heading rapidly towards "OND", as I have learned to call the last quarter of the year. This includes "Black Monday", so called because it's the first day that retailers show an overall profit for the year. We stand ready to help them achieve that.

New Sales Consultant: Lluvia Brito

For those of you who made it through last month's Rambling, you are no doubt sitting on the edge of your chair waiting to hear about our new Flagstaff Sales Consultant. Lluvia graduated from Northern Arizona University and has been working in Flagstaff since then. She started and ran her own business for a while, giving her an understanding of many of our Flagstaff customers. Most recently she has been working at several wine bars. She realized that she has a fascination for wine and has been studying hard during this time. Flagstaff is a pretty small town - everyone knows everyone. Lluvia is part of this network.

New Winery - Hendry

When Orangewood was just starting (in 2001), Laurie and I learned that having one wine in our portfolio was a little weak. We visited Napa, where my daughter and her family live, and looked around. Just behind the park where they walk their dogs was the Hendry winery. We visited for a tasting, but found they were already represented in Arizona. (Orangewood Policy: do not poach other distributors' wineries.) A few years later, one of Laurie's cousins visited and sent us a bottle of Hendry Zinfandel. Very tasty. Hendry was still represented in Arizona, darn. So, last month, when

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New Customers

House of Bards

4915 East Speedway
Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85712
(520) 327-2011

[The Oak Room](#)

61 East University Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201
(480) 844-7437

[Rhythm & Wine](#)

7605 East Pinnacle Peak Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
(480) 478-6999

Hendry called asking if Oranewood would consider representing them, there should be no surprise about the answer. Hendry has been growing grapes since 1939, selling the grapes to Mondavi, Opus 1 and Kent Rosenblum. Since 1992, they have also been making their own wines. Now into their third generation of managing this property, they have become a legend that we are proud to represent.

Rambling

One the wineries we represented a long time ago was Davis Bynum. Laurie and I visited his winery in Russian River. Davis had bought the property because he couldn't get a permit for a winery in Napa Valley. He looked around for grapes and found a neighbor, Joe Rochioli, was selling Pinot Noir grapes to Gallo for their Hearty Burgundy program at \$100/ton. Davis offered Joe \$250/ton, and offered to put the Rochioli name on the label as a vineyard designate.

What's with all the vineyard designates, barrel selects and so forth anyway? Here goes...(Winemakers, please forgive me for the vast oversimplification of this art).

Wine making is an art, not a science. No matter how hard the winemaker tries to keep things exactly the same, the results vary. Grapes from the same part of a vineyard, fermented together, aged in seemingly identical barrels, have differences six months, a year, two years later. How to deal with these differences varies from winery to winery. Some wineries decide to take the best two barrels of wine and designate them "Barrel Select". Some are focused on a core wine and will figure out which of the barrels best fit the profile of the core wine. The barrels that are too good for the regular core wine become reserve. The barrels that are not good enough go to the house blend that may be only available at the tasting room. Other wineries are focusing on vineyard or block (part of a vineyard) designated wines. Now the selection of barrels is different. The ones that the winemaker feels best represent the terroir move forward, the rest become a less focused wine. (What do I mean by focus? The most focused wine is a block within a vineyard. An example would be the Dos Oakies wine from Vino Noceto. Less focused would be the vineyard. An example would be the Dr. Crane Vineyard that belongs to Salvestrin. Next, the appellation such as Napa Valley or Willamette Valley. Finally it would be a broad designation like California or Oregon. That means the grapes can originate from anywhere in the state.) Or, if not good enough for one of the winery's wines, they are sold off on the bulk market and finish up in someone's Hearty Burgundy.

The Rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

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

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