

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Volume 5, Issue 7

August 27, 2015

Introduction

July and August are historically the worst months for our wine sales. 2015 is no exception! Fortunately, September is upon us. August is a good time to be somewhere other than Phoenix. Accordingly my three top sales people, one of their spouses and I visited Napa Valley and the Sierra Foothills this month. We met with twelve of our suppliers (wineries) and worked on relationships. We also tried a little wine. Our thanks to those wineries for their hospitality and our regrets to the ones we did not visit on this trip.

Topic of the Month - Black Glass Tasting

Recently a link to a New Yorker [article](#) from 2002 was circulated amongst the Orangewood sales team. You don't need to read it, but the thesis was that you cannot tell whether a wine is red or white without actually seeing the colour. Allegedly, tests have been done with results not much different than tossing a coin. Ever eager to accept a challenge, we started "is it red or white" tasting of a single wine at the beginning of our sales meetings. We have a black Riedel wine glass that is quite charming. Without spilling any wine, we can attest that we cannot tell the colour of the liquid in the glass.



Red or White?

Before talking about what we have done so far, I want to talk about this problem in theory. Usually when we taste, we look at the colour and it sets certain expectations. If red, we are thinking cherries and berries and red fruit aromas and tastes. If white, we are thinking tropical fruits, stone fruits and floral notes. Maybe if we did not have that expectation, we might find pineapple in red wine and blackberries in white. What is our process for determining colour without seeing it? Are there any aromas or flavors that are always associated with red wine or always associated with white wine? Perhaps there are, but we have not yet fingered them. White wines are usually served at cooler temperatures,

In This Issue

[Introduction](#)
[Black Glass Tasting](#)
[New Winery](#)
[Rambling](#)

New Customers

[GCM Liquor](#)

118 North Gilbert Road
Gilbert, AZ 85234
(480) 926-4478

[IronWorks Restaurant](#)

17233 North 45th Avenue
Bellair Golf Course
Glendale, AZ 85308
(602) 843-0909

[Johnny Gibson's Downtown Market](#)

11 South 6th Avenue
Tucson, AZ. 85701
(520) 393-8544

[Le Rendez-Vous](#)

3844 East Fort Lowell Road
Tucson, AZ 85716
(520) 323-7373

[Penca](#)

50 East Broadway Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 8570
520-203-7681

[Proper](#)

300 East Congress Street
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(520) 396-3357

[Sassi](#)

10455 East Pinnacle Peak
Parkway
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
(480) 502-9095

but for these tests the temperature of all wines will be the same 60F - 65F. So how do we tell the difference? I hypothesize that it is all about memory. If I taste a wine and recognize its aromas and tastes as appropriate for, say, Sauvignon Blanc, then it is a simple matter to declare the wine to be white. If the wine is not something I recognize, I use my knowledge of red or white flavors to take guess.

To start with, we are restricting our tastings to single varietal wines in our portfolio that are (in my opinion) varietally correct. This gives us a good chance of spotting wines we have tried before and seeing how good our senses are without the colour component to rely on. So far we have tried four wines this way, and with most of us recognising each varietal, as a team we are batting 100%. The most recent wine was Viognier, a little more obscure, and our opinions were not unanimous: 6 white, 2 red and 1 don't know. So far my hypothesis is being supported - if we recognise the wine we know its colour.

What I found, in addition, is that this is another aspect to tasting wines. As I am swirling and sniffing a wine, I ask myself, "Is there anything about this wine that makes it clearly red or white?" Stay tuned for more insights as we explore less familiar varietals.

New Winery

Del Rio Springs - Arizona

We have been looking for a local winery for some time but all the ones we spoke to did not work out, either from their perspective or ours. Finally, we were referred (by Wendy at Abineau Lodge) to Rick and Maricor Skladzien, who started Del Rio Springs Vineyard and have just released their second vintage. Rick and Maricor have previously made wine in Iowa and Sonoma Co. California. They moved to Arizona in search of a special terroir and microclimate. They have established a vineyard in Paulden, a small town close to Prescott about 90 minutes North East of Phoenix. It is located on an east facing bench overlooking the striking Chino Valley rimmed by the Mingus mountains on the east, the Bradshaw mountains on the south and the Juniper mountains on the west. With an elevation of 4,550 feet, the temperatures are far from the searing deserts people associate with Arizona. They have selected the varietals Pinot Noir, Carménère and Phoenix (a hybrid developed in Germany) as the grapes best suited to their vineyard. The Orangewood sales team tried the wines and agrees these are wines we are now delighted to be offering to our customers.

Rambling

Sorso Wine Room

15323 North Scottsdale Road
Suite 150
(Scottsdale Quarter)
Scottsdale, AZ 85254
(480) 951-4344

Tucson Country Club

2950 North Camino Principal
Tucson, AZ 85715
(520) 298-2381

Note on the Pictures

I have put a web page with larger versions of the pictures [here](#).

In the mornings and evenings my chore is primarily shoveling up the poop from our three horses. I have a special shovel with tines to allow small stones and non-poop to fall through and a wheel barrow to fill with this processed hay. As I scoop and swing the shovel towards the barrow I am reminded of Frank Galbraith, the work study guru. I had read *Cheaper by the Dozen* as a kid, and that probably led me to think I would like to do that kind of thing. In Britain, at the time, there was a lot of industrial unrest (read strikes) and it always seemed to me that a broader view of management and union goals should lead to more harmonious times and more prosperity for both sides. This was before I read about Douglas Bader (the legless WWII fighter pilot) and Guy Gibson (the leader of the Dam Busters Squadron of Lancaster bombers) and decided that I really should be a Royal Air Force pilot. That notion lasted most of the way through University where I learned to fly single engine De Havilland Chipmunks, and also learned that wearing itchy uniforms and calling people "Sir" was not my cup of tea. So, it was back to work study until technology lent a hand and I found I had an aptitude for computer coding.

Anyway, I scoop the poop in what I hope is an ergonomically appropriate way, and have been getting a pain in my right elbow. My doctor says it is golfer's elbow (it the opposite side of the elbow to where tennis elbow would be) and suggested I rest it. Hey, Laurie ... never mind, that's not going to work. So, I began doing my shoveling left-handed and



View from the pen

operating my computer mouse with my left hand. The pain has mostly subsided, so now I shovel with whichever hand is going to work best with the current position of the wheel barrow. Swinging my body to the left is best if my right hand is on the handle of the shovel and vice versa. I was thinking this kind of makes me an ambidextrous pooper scooper, but on consideration, I decided the correct term, as used in baseball, would be "switch hitter".

The Rambler shovels on...

Cheers,

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