

# Orangewood Wines

*Small Wineries, Great Wines*

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## Introduction

A Happy New Year! We have survived the "Holiday Season", but here in Arizona the fun is only just beginning. In January we have two antique car auctions, then the Phoenix Open Golf Tournament, running from the end of January into February, which is when the Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show takes place. March is Spring Training for many professional baseball teams. All of these events would be less fun without some adult beverages.

Amongst all this excitement, KJZZ is having their First Press Arizona event. This is an event we have supported for the last 9 years. To remind you of why you need to reach for your phone (smart or otherwise) to get tickets, it is the topic of the month.

## First Press Arizona

First Press Arizona is a charity event in support of KJZZ (the Phoenix affiliate of NPR) and Spot 127 (their associated youth media development center providing training for youths who otherwise could not afford it). The event focus is a gourmet dinner designed to be wine friendly. The food is prepared and served by the Westin Kierland team. Everyone is seated at tables of twelve. Each table has wines selected from a specific winery to pair with each of the courses. Included at the table are two winery representatives, there to talk about their winery and explain why they selected the wines being poured. Prior to dinner, there is a chance to try wines from all of the represented wineries along with hors d'oeuvres. The trick is to avoid eating and drinking too much at this stage. There is still a lot of eating and drinking to be done at dinner. Attendees can also join a winery's wine club and purchase wines for pick up a day or two later.

In addition to the gastronomic and epicurean aspects of the event, the wineries have donated silent auction and raffle items. And that's not all! There is a live auction, music, dancing...

Orangewood Wines is supporting six tables this year: Airfield Estates from Washington state; Avignonesi from Tuscany; Italy Fort Ross from Sonoma, California; Graziano Family of Wines from Mendocino, California; Mi Terruño from Mendoza, Argentina and Salvestrin Winery, St Helena, California. People are traveling from each of these wineries to present their wines at First Press. This really is a special treat to hear from these folk. First Press Arizona has a [website](#) - read more about it and buy a ticket - or a table!

## Rambling

As a wine enthusiast I have lots of fun just drinking wine. I do enjoy the swirling. It's a skill that you may take for granted, but remember back to the stain on the white table cloth. I feel humbled by my weak ability to name that aroma that pops from the glass. I know I have to practice more. You know where I am going with this...The first taste of wine overwhelms me with flavors and textures that, again, usually stump my ability to name. None the less, I am always able to figure out whether I like it or not. Finally, I swallow the wine and what lingers on is a reminder of the process so far. If I have the pleasure of this wine for more than a sip, I can get a sense of how it evolves. Once the cork is removed, the wine changes in the next minutes and hours. This wine business is dirty job, but someone has to do it.

But that is not all! Our perceptions of the wine are affected by what we are eating. Imagine that we have just tried a really nice wine. Now imagine that we have a plate of food that is looking and smelling delicious. I look at the food as a series of components (meat and two veg :)). I have already tried the wine. Now I try a component of the meal. How was that? Yum! Now try that wine again. The wine tastes different. Is it better? Next component. Oh, wow, this combination is spectacular. I have just found a great pairing. Next component, pairing? Richard - stop playing with your food! Yes, Mummy.

The point is, there is so much to enjoy, or perhaps I am easily amused. It's true, I am easily amused. You can be amused too, with food prepared by the best, wine selected specifically for this food and knowledgeable people to help with your thoughts about the process. Reach for that phone now. Operators are standing by!

The Rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

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