

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

The Holiday Season is upon us! Best wishes to you and yours for a happy and safe one.

From March to July, I rambled about Covid-19. We have learned more in the last four months, so it's time to raise our heads to evaluate where we are, what we know and what we should expect.

This month Leslie writes about what she likes to curl up with on these cold evenings.

Winter Solstice

Portfolio Notes - by Leslie Zellmer

As the days shorten and we progress toward Winter Solstice, the evenings easily slip into cozying up with a good book, a blanket and a glass of wine or a warm cup of tea. What am I sipping on this most wonderful time of the year? Find out below, where I offer a few examples of wines that soothe the soul (we need a whole lot of that these days!) and warm the belly.

Most people immediately think of red wines for those soul soothing, belly warming selections. Yep, there are plenty, but white wines can be wonderful for these purposes.

Often associated with celebration and excitement, sparkling wines are very comforting. Especially ones with depth and weight on the palate, like **Champagne Tribaut Cuvée René**. Made from a blend of 70% Chardonnay from the famed Les Crayères vineyard and 30% Pinot Noir from the renowned Crossats d'Écueil vineyard, this stunner is full of complexity. On the palate you may find hints of vanilla and hazelnut with a beautiful yeasty, brioche nose. Due to its aging on the dead yeast (lees) for six years, this wine is very layered - one to contemplate.

Elena Walch's Pinot Bianco has a warmth to it, with an apple and herb nose and a mineral rich palate. This wine from the Alpine region of Italy, Alto Adige, is full of beautiful acidity that will draw you back to the glass for another satisfying sip.

Vine Cliff just released their **2018** vintage **Napa Cabernet Sauvignon**, and this cozy, scrumptious wine has smells of black cherry, sweet tobacco and dark chocolate, with a palate of silky black fruit. It's a warm hug in your mouth.

Last is a striking Washington wine from **Avennia: Arnaut Syrah**. Those who know this wine are aware of its wild nature. It is filled with savory, meaty tones, with plenty of juicy blueberry and black cherry fruit on the nose, with more

black fruit and floral notes and doses of bacon fat. Layers upon layers of flavors. Indeed, this one will thaw your bones after a cold day.

Concerning the tea, I have been quite fond of a certain tea concoction I threw together a few weeks back: black peppercorns, cinnamon, cloves, dried lavender and cardamom. If you want the details, I am happy to share.

The Rambler

Since I last wrote about Covid-19 in July, we have learned some things. The big news this week is the start of the vaccine roll out. A tremendous achievement by the pharmaceutical companies and a coming logistical achievement, as the vaccine is distributed around the world. What does this mean? Not much in the short term. High priority people can choose to get vaccinated and, as a result, will be more comfortable leaving their houses, visiting supermarkets and restaurants. The rest of us will have to wait for that opportunity. Perhaps in the July to September time frame, everyone who wants to be vaccinated can be. By then we should also have a better understanding of what the various vaccines do. How long do they protect us? Do they prevent asymptomatic transmission? Do they work with evolving coronaviruses (do we have to worry about what strain of coronavirus is showing up this month)? Meanwhile, wear that mask, keep your social distance, wash your hands...

The other news this week, that ought to be just as big, is that more Americans have died of Covid-19 in nine months than died in the four years that the US fought in World War II. More Americans are dying every day than died in the 9/11 attack. America is number one in death rate. In addition, we have little clue about the longer term effects. The "long haulers" are not getting much attention, but are like those wounded in wars - they continue to suffer. Yet our leadership has failed to educate us about the perils of this new virus. The whole country needs to understand how we are being ravaged by this virus and how actions we all take could reduce the effects (self isolation, masks,...).

Since July, I have been trying to encourage you towards: "Carpe Diem" (seize the day). You can enjoy reminiscing about yesterday, feel optimistic about tomorrow, but today is the day to enjoy.

The Rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

Richard and Laurie
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