

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

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Introduction

Many of us at Orangewood now have, one way or another, antibodies to combat Covid-19. We are all trying to figure out what that means: party as in the Roaring 20's following the last pandemic, or be more timid in our re-emergence. I think we will see a spectrum of behaviors. Predicting what that means for Arizona continues to be challenging. Will we be back to snowbirds disappearing for the summer? Will everyone be spending their stimulus money on restaurant visits? Will people continue to get a lot of wine at wine stores and through wine clubs? All good questions.

This month Leslie writes about the challenges on the supply side of the business.

Supply and Transportation Woes

Portfolio Notes - by Leslie Zellmer

The pandemic has brought us much uncertainty and change. Remember back to last year when there was an odd but serious shortage of toilet paper? Which inevitably led to a shortage of bidets? Thank goodness that's behind us (pun intended). In the wine world we saw the gas pedal was to the floor in retail stores and the brakes were slammed in restaurant sales. Go back a little further, before the pandemic, when the wine world was in tumult over the hefty tariffs applied to some wines from certain EU countries. Importers were bringing in a year's supply of wine to avoid paying the tariffs and to be positioned to have the best price for imports in their markets. Sounded like a good play. That is, until the aforementioned brake slamming in restaurants and the new uncertainties.

We are now a year into the pandemic, vaccines are available, confidence is up, restaurants are open and tariffs have been paused. Cue the angelic voices and part the clouds. Well, not so fast...what actually got cued up is a perfect storm. Demand has grown with restaurants opening and import orders are a plenty with the pause in tariffs. Pair that with already congested ports (soon to be more congested, thanks Ever Given!), a domestic truck driver shortage, along with a national wine bottle glass shortage, and we are facing some serious challenges in the wine business. This is all in addition to the fires along the west coast last year, the damage from which is already

starting to rear its head, as some wineries start managing inventory knowing they won't have a 2020 vintage to sell.

Of course, similar issues are afoot in just about every industry today. It will take quite some time for all of these clogs and hiccups to shake out. Until then, grab a glass of wine and relax. We will take care of the rest.

The Rambler

I have never been a very serious (that is, good) runner. I ran cross-country in high school for an intermural team, but only because they didn't have enough people for the team. In the races, we had a 6.2 mile course that went past a church, through a cow pasture, up a hill, around a stand of beeches and then worked back to school. It was towards the end of one of these runs that I received some running advice, the only advice I have ever got on running. Mr. Carter was our sports master. (He also coached the rugby team I played on and taught geography.) "Corles" he said, "Stop clenching those fists, relax those shoulders. You are wasting energy." It was good advice, that I have carried with me to this day.

I have struggled with "social media" for some time now. I don't think that I have anything worth saying that fits into 140 characters. I also find that the quick responses to others' comments bring out the worst in people. Unable to take the time to explain a point of view, the comments are mostly assertions or insults. I finally figured out how to delete my Facebook account. They don't go easily, as they are hoping I will change my mind in the 30 day grace period. Not worrying about those quick responses has allowed me to unclench my fists, relax my shoulders and ramble with more energy. Thank you, Mr. Carter.

The Rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

Richard and Laurie
Orangewood Wines