

Subject: Orangewood Wines Newsletter - Volume 3, Issue 29 – July 26th, 2009
Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2009, 1:20 PM

Introduction

Times are tough. Not only did we fail to add any new restaurants or wine stores to our customer list, some went out of business. Also going out of business was another wine distributor, Paso Fino, who had grown in parallel with us over the last few years. It was an unfortunate situation; however, as they wound down the business, Orangewood had the opportunity to provide representation for three of the wineries. They are described in the “New Wineries” section.

Box Score

New Restaurants:	0
New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets:	0
New Sales People:	0
New Wineries	3

Contents

[New Wineries](#)
[Wine Varietal of the Month](#)
[Rambling](#)

New Wineries

[Il Cuore](#)

Il Cuore (pronounced “eel quarry”) translates to “The Heart” from Italian, the language of romance. The name is also the title of the original watercolor by Dan Rizzie featured on the label. Il Cuore is a fitting tribute to the Italian immigrants who first planted the North Coast of California to vines in the nineteenth century. The grapes for the 2006 Barbera were harvested from two vineyards in Lake and Mendocino Counties. Both vineyards are located on well-drained gravelly soil terraces above valley floors. Grape production is low from old vine plantings, resulting in concentrated flavors in the mature grapes.

[Icaria Creek Winery](#)

Icaria Creek Winery is located at the Northern tip of Sonoma County. It is within the Alexander Valley appellation, which lies one and a half hours north of San Francisco. They call their micro-appellation, situated about 400 feet above sea level, the Asti Foothills. The vineyard estate is a fifty acre piece with twenty-six acres planted to Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Malbec.

[Seabiscuit Ranch](#)

The Legendary thoroughbred, Seabiscuit, was retired to a ranch in Mendocino County's Redwood Valley, where his memory inspires their winemaking endeavors. Seabiscuit Ranch vineyards are located on a southern portion of the original Ridgewood Ranch. Located just 20 miles from the Mendocino coastline, these small, award-winning vineyards are perched at an altitude of 1,000 feet on steep slopes of the Pacific Coastal Mountain range. The vines are nurtured and harvested entirely by hand according to sustainable growing practices.

Wine Varietal of the Month – Rosé

Let's see, "rosé" is a touch of red added to some white and blended together, right? Nope, wrong. We know rosé is not a varietal but can be made from a varietal, so one might be forgiven for thinking varietal when thinking about rosé. Rosé can be made from any red grape. Actually white wine can be made from almost any red grape too. When looking for rosé we see pretty much any of the varietals, malbec, merlot, mourvedre, even zinfandel, or it could be a blend of these, but it's still made from red grapes. Rosé is just a way of saying pink, as opposed to red or white. So if it's not a varietal, what is it beyond colour? Rosé is a red wine that was separated from its skins early in its fermentation cycle.

The meat/pulp/juice of a grape is white in 99.9% of all grapes (you get extra credit if you name a grape varietal where the meat is naturally red). When the grape is crushed and the juice starts to flow, the skins and seeds float to the top of the tank. White wine can be made from red grapes at this point by simply draining the wine from that tank and fermenting it without the skins, but we're looking for rosé here. To get rosé one must leave the skins and juice together long enough to pick up some colour. There are two ways to accomplish this task: "pumping over" and "punching the cap".

1. Pumping over: During fermentation the wine actually starts to heat up, to simmer. The temperature of fermenting wine can be reduced by hooking a hose to the bottom of the tank and pumping the wine from the bottom and spraying it over the top. This action cools the wine while simultaneously drawing colour, tannins and acids and the many health benefits from the skins, seeds and stems that it's flowing through - can you spell "Resveratrol"? This method may take as little as a day to accomplish the desired color the winemaker is looking for but may be left longer to extract other aforementioned components to enhance the wine's quality. Leave it too long, however, and the result is red wine.
2. Punching the cap: A long sturdy plank is placed across the open top of the fermenting tank and someone (winemaker, cellar-rat) walks back-and-forth pushing the cap down with a large plunger. The danger lies in that the fermentation produces CO₂ which, being heavier than O₂, sits in a layer on top of the fermenting wine. It is not uncommon to have a "falling into the vat" accident, which is quite dangerous. Punching down, as this is also called, is repeated every several hours until the desired color is reached.

Often you will hear the term "saignée process". What this refers to is what happens next. In the saignée process, once the desired colour is achieved, some amount, say 10%, of the fermenting juice is "bled off". (Saignée is the past pluperfect participle of the French verb "saigner" – to bleed). The remaining 90% is left to be pumped over or punched down with the skins and finishes up as red wine. Otherwise, in the non saignée process, the skins and pips are removed and all the juice moves on to become rosé.

Rosé wines suffer from association with that other pink "wine", white zinfandel, a very sweet wine that I sometimes claim is the product of a large oil company rather than made from grapes.

“Real” rosé wine is dry (no sugar) or very close to it. It has colour – which can be anything from salmon pink to shocking pink. They are fragrant and delicious, are wonderful summer wines (or all year round in Arizona) and pair well with salads and poolside fun. Try one - Orangewood has a great selection.

David Girard – El Dorado – Blend of Grenache, Mourvedre, Counoise
Vino Noceto – Amador – Rosato di Sangiovese
Belasco de Baquedano – Argentina – Rosa of Malbec
Jenke – Australia – Cabernet Franc
Buttonwood Farm – Santa Ynez Valley – Syrah
Praxis – Alexander Valley - Syrah

And, the rather special Richard Grant Sparkling Pinot Noir, Napa Valley, made from the Wrotham Pinot Noir grapes that trace their heritage back from Napa to Kent, England to the Roman invasion in 43 A.D. (film at 11:00).

Rambling

Maybe you thought that I had rambled enough in the Rosé section. You would be right.

The Rambler rambles on...

From all of us at Orangewood Wines,

Richard (newsletter writer), Laurie (editor) and Jim Wallace (varietal contributor)
Orangewood Wines