

Subject: *Orangewood Wines Newsletter - Volume 3, Issue 33 – November 25th, 2009*

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Introduction

It's that time of the year. The air conditioning I turned off, the heater is not yet turned on. Our daytime highs are in the 70's the overnight lows in the 30's. A 40 degree diurnal swing, no wonder I have thermal shock. It is also the time when the first Christmas, oops I meant holiday greeting, card arrives (thank you Susan and Bill Arbios) and I know that we will not be getting cards mailed off to anyone again this year, so please accept my early apologies for not sending you a card. It's nothing personal.

Box Score

New Restaurants:	0
New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets	1
New Wineries	0
New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets:	1
New Sales Consultants	0

Contents

[New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets](#)
[Wine Varietal of the Month](#)
[Rambling](#)

New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets

[Ground Control](#)

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Wine Varietal of the Month – Chardonnay

I had wanted to do Chardonnay last month but Jim said he had in mind red. This month we'll see what he has in mind. Just because chardonnay is the single most popular wine in North America doesn't mean that we shouldn't talk about it. The single most popular, why would that be I ask myself? Why, replies Jim, it is because Chardonnay is Chablis, Chardonnay is Pouilly Fuissé, Chardonnay is White Burgundy and for years, in America, chardonnay was called Pinot Chardonnay because of that other grape from Burgundy called Pinot Noir. So in thinking like most Americans always have it stands to reason it should be called Pinot. Not so say the experts. It is from Burgundy, it is simply chardonnay. I, on the other hand, usually respond that "Chardonnay" is a long word that is difficult to pronounce and we Americans are proud of being able to pronounce it correctly. So when we want order a wine in a restaurant without sounding like we've just fallen off the turnip truck we say "I'd like a glass of chardonnay please". There wasn't that easy. Much better than making a pigs ear out of pronouncing "gewürztraminer" or "Gundlach-Bundschu".

Chardonnay often carries aromas of apple and peach, light citrus flavors of lemon and tropical fruit, especially pineapple, to floral flavors of acacia and hawthorn. It can be so delicate, in fact, that even blending small amounts of other varieties into a Chardonnay will usually completely mask its original aromas and flavors. Notes of oak are often pronounced, especially if it is fermented or aged in new barrels or too long in older, seasoned barrels or if malo-lactic fermentation is introduced. You can think about malo-lactice as if malo acids are malicious and lactic acids are milk/buttery. The introduction of this fermentation is to reduce the malicious acids and to introduce buttery flavors and aromas. How accurate is that? Who knows but it works for Jim and I.

More recently California chardonnay has transformed into a spectrum of wines running from no oak and no butter all the way to the very oaky and buttery. What is best? There is no best – it is personal preference, so plan to ask your server what types of chardonnay are served. Try the different versions and decide what you like. Perhaps you may decide that what you prefer depends on what you are eating. Chardonnay goes very well with Shellfish and Oysters.

Chardonnay is usually a rich dry white wine that will age nicely for 2 to 6 years.

Orangewood wines carries a variety of Chardonnay wines varying in style and price.

Blackjack Ranch Chardonnay "21"

David Girard Chardonnay

Frank Family Vineyards Napa Valley Chardonnay

Frank Family Vineyards Lewis Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay

Il Cuore Chardonnay

Jenke Vineyards Barossa Boxer Chardonnay

Kestrel Vintners Chardonnay

Riverbench Vineyards Bedrock Chardonnay

Riverbench Vineyards Estate Chardonnay

Sea Biscuit Ranch Chardonnay

Stoller Vineyards Estate Chardonnay

Ventana Vineyards Gold Stripe Chardonnay

Rambling

OND. What? October, November and December are usually the best months of the year for wine sales so that they have become an acronym. I hear it so infrequently that I usually have to ask what it means. (A tip for you too – never be intimidated about asking what something means. I always ask and everyone knows that they had better get back to speaking English and that I am a slow learner.) This year OND has been getting off to a slow start, but seems to be in as good a flow as we can hope for. In between rushing around I have been gazing at my navel wondering where the wine business is going and what we need to do to adapt.

The Rambler rambles on...

From all of us at Orangewood Wines,

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