

# Orangewood Wines

*Small Wineries, Great Wines*

## Orangewood Wines' Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 10  
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### Introduction

June finally reminded us that it gets hot in Phoenix in the summer. Nothing record breaking, you understand but 116F is hot no matter where you stand in it. Still, air conditioning works, and our black Labrador, Dizzi, attests to the efficacy of jumping in the pool. Laurie and I attest to the efficacy of chilled Rosé.

### Box Score

New Restaurants:	0
New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets	2
New Wineries	0
New Sales People	0

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### New Wine Stores/Wine Bars

#### [Oakville Grocery](#)

Phoenix Cityscape  
50 West Jefferson Street - Suite 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
(602) 252-7600

#### [Wedge & Bottle](#)

4025 East Chandler Boulevard - Suite 44  
Phoenix, AZ 85048  
(480) 704-1255

## Wine Terminology of the Month - Colour

I often suggest that wine tasting is a four step process. Color, Aroma, Taste and Finish. I am often asked what to look for in each of these steps. Jim Wallace, our man in Prescott and a veteran of the wine industry and wine tasting, has expanded the "colour" part of this. Of course he spells it "color", but I won't hold that against him. He suggests that a wine's color can give many clues to its character.

First, color reflects the specific variety of grape (or grapes) the wine is made from. Take two common red grapes, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir. Cabernet berries are typically smaller, with thicker, darker skins than Pinot Noir. As a result, wines based on Cabernet tend to show darker colors, leaning toward purple and black, instead of the ruby tones associated with Pinot.

Second, color is influenced by growing conditions in the vineyard. A warm summer and dry autumn produce grapes that are fully ripe, with a high ratio of skin to juice, resulting in dark colors. A cool summer or a rainy harvest can result in unripe or diluted grapes, which will show up in colors with lighter hues and less intensity.

Vinification techniques can also affect color. When red wines ferment, the grape skins are left to macerate in the juice, like a tea bag steeping in warm water. The elements that create color, the anthocyanins, are found in the skins, not the juice itself (most grapes, even red varieties, have clear juice), so the longer the skins steep, the darker the color will be. Even after fermentation is over and the skins are discarded, some solid material remains in suspension in the wine. Some winemakers choose to remove this material, through fining or filtering; others believe the wine benefits from a little residual deposit.

Time in bottle--the inevitable process of aging--also has an impact. Young red wines are full of anthocyanins, and so their colors are deeper; with maturity, these coloring elements evolve, lightening through red to colors described as "brick" or "amber," slowly combining and falling out of suspension in the wine, creating sediment in the bottom of the bottle.

So, if you pour a glass of red wine and look at it closely, you may find a deep garnet color, with good intensity but not brilliantly clear. You might reasonably infer that the wine is made from Cabernet Sauvignon grown in a warm climate, that the winemaker chose to extend maceration and to filter only lightly, and that it's from a recent good vintage. If the tasting's not blind and you already know what the wine is, you can compare its color with what you might expect: perhaps it's exceptionally dark for a weak vintage, indicating good grape-growing or winemaking abilities, or maybe it's already faded for its age, suggesting that the grapes lacked concentration, or the winemaker was unable to extract the intensity that allows wines to mature with grace and complexity.

## Rambling

Last month Laurie and I took a rafting trip through the Grand Canyon. This is something we have been doing every three years with a group led by Robert. This was our fifth trip. It has become a tradition to conduct a few wine tastings on these trips. This is particularly fun for me because I can pick whatever wines I want - subject to the group preference for red and big. It's tough for the participants to decide they wanted something else in mid-stream, so to speak. The tastings make a great change of pace from getting doused in 45F water as we raft through the rapids, braised lightly as we hike into side canyons in the 115F sunlight and slightly toasted from the many Tecates we inhaled. At the end of the day, after we have unloaded the rafts and staked out our camping spots and the boatmen are preparing dinner, we can sit in our camp chairs and enjoy some wines with stories from yours truly about who makes them and why I picked them for the trip. This trip we had Cabernet Sauvignon from Arbios, Dutch Henry, Frank Family and Mantra; Zinfandel from Frank Family, Joseph Jewell, Mantra and Tres Sabores; and a selection of wines from the Graziano Family of Wines. For recreational drinking we took along some Vino Noceto Sangiovese and David Girard Grenache. What I notice at the tastings is that everyone has a different favorite. That's why there are so many different wines - even with the same varietal.

After dinner it was early to bed and early to rise for another day of no phones, no email.

The Rambler rambles on...

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

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