

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Orangewood Wines' Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 22 September 16, 2012

Introduction

Every year my expectation for early September is relief from the long summer in the form of rain and falling temperatures. Usually I am disappointed and have to wait until late September or early October, but this year I am delighted to welcome that coolness early. While we cannot yet have the windows open all night, we can have them open briefly in the mornings. I declare that summer is over and the fall has begun. Cheers!

Box Score

New Restaurants:	1
New Retail/Wine Bar Outlets	0
New Sales People	0
New Wineries/Importers	2

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New Restaurants

[Tommy V's Urban Kitchen and Bar](#)

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New Wineries

Mutt Lynch Winery

One of our customers (that would be you, Peggy) suggested that we evaluate this winery for consideration in our portfolio. Along with the suggestion was an email trail in which the owner said “*Looking for someone really really small (pays their bills) and has a dog in the office..... oh, and has a sense of humor!!*” So I sent a picture of Dizzi, our black Labrador, and expressed interest. After a number of emails and phone calls, a relationship was established. So, who are these guys?

The California wine business brought Chris and Brenda Lynch together in a chance meeting over 20 years ago. Mutt Lynch Winery was born in 1995, combining the Lynch’s mutual passion for wine and “all things dog.”

Their motto: “Apply Dog Logic to Life: Eat Well, Be Loved, Get Petted, Sleep A Lot, Dream of a Leash-Free World.” (SARK)

Mutt Lynch Winery and Tasting Room are in Healdsburg, Sonoma County. They have been sourcing grapes from vineyards up and down the coast of California. Brenda aims to create fruit-forward wines with varietally true aromatics, mid palette weight and flavor, and a full bodied and balanced finish. The beauty of these diverse regions is that they share the cooling influence of the Pacific Ocean. By the way, Brenda’s travels always seem to have stops in beach towns for a cold beer at the local pub, which she claims are an equally important part of her winemaking...

Patton Valley Vineyard

Unlike Mutt Lynch, Patton Valley did not have one of our customers contact us. They did however ask Arizona businesses who would be a good distributor for them. I am pleased to say that our name came up a lot – which is positive feedback on our customer relationship front. Thank you, whoever you are. This winery started as a dream shared by two guys, Dave Chen and Monte Pitt, who met in college. Some while later the dream began to unfold. Starting with the purchase of 72 acres in Gaston, Oregon in 1995, they have created Patton Valley Vineyard. The vines were planted in 1997 with a variety of clones. The Laurelwood soils provide the excellent drainage needed for high quality Pinot Noir vines. Patton Valley is very concerned with sustainability and is LIVE® Certified for both vineyard and winemaking practices. While there is no dog in their winery pictures, I bet there is one. They also demonstrate a sense of humor as exemplified by their [technical data sheet](#) for their de-Classified Pinot Noir. It appeals to my inner Secret Agent Man. Get some for the Harry Palmer in you.

Wine Topic of the Month – Punt

I was struggling to decide what to write about this month, so during our morning constitutional Laurie suggested that talking about Punts would be interesting and a likely source of puns. So here I am dropping back 10 yards to...punt. So, what is a punt if it's not a wooden boat found on the rivers and streams around Oxford University. In the context of this newsletter, it's the dent in the bottom of a bottle that fools you into thinking there is more wine left in the bottle than there is. A little research prior to writing this makes it obvious that the folks on the web don't have a clear idea why there is a punt at all. Lots of theories, but no firm conclusions. Standing back from all that, I can give my unambiguous opinions. There is no disagreement that the presence of a punt in a champagne bottle is critical to the riddling process. That is the process of slowly rotating the bottle and turning it increasingly upside down, so that after a few months all the yeast is collected in the neck of the bottle. The punt allows the bottle to be grasped and turned more easily than if the bottle were blunt ended. The punt, in my opinion, was designed solely for that purpose. However, having been invented, it has now been adopted, again in my opinion, as a convenient way of giving tremendous design freedom to bottle designers. Wander around a wine store and marvel at all the different shapes and heights and widths of the bottles. Some are tall, some have broad shoulders and taper to the bottom, some have thick glass and are quite heavy...you get the picture. How can this be, when the contents of these bottles is 750 milliliters or 25.4 ounces of wine? The answer, you are way ahead of me, is that after designing the shape of the bottle the punt is sized to get that volume correct.

Follow up

Following up on a couple items from previous newsletters (which can be found [here](#)):

1. In August 2011, the topic was "Bottle Size and Aging". I asserted that you should consider raising and lowering the temperature of your wine storage by a couple of degrees. Warmer in summer, cooler in winter to imitate the way a cave would vary in temperature each year and to allow a tiny bit a air to be forced in or out. If you subscribe to this notion, now is the time to drop the temperature by a couple of degrees. In the Southern Hemisphere of course, the direction would be warmer.
2. In June, I left some with the impression that I was going to produce an own labeled wine. This is not the case. Orangewood's expertise is representing fine wines to our customers. Customers appreciate the service we provide and the quality of wines we present. Getting distracted by trying to emulate our suppliers makes no sense to me.
3. In August, Jim Wallace wrote about his preference for cooler climate Sauvignon Blanc and his distaste for warmer climate ones. Suzy Gullett of Vino Noceto, who does not produce a Sauvignon Blanc, wrote to say that she enjoys Sauvignon Blancs from their Region IV, mentioning one that is crisp, fruity and wonderful. Thank you Suzy for taking the time to let me know – and so making the point that wine is very much personal to the drinker. Part of my goal is to teach consumers that while wine critics have opinions, those opinions may or may not coincide with your own.

Rambling

While Laurie and I were in Hawaii last month celebrating her (number removed – Ed) birthday, we both reread *Corelli's Mandolin*. This is a terrific book by Louis de Bernières set on a Greek island during World War II. It is funny, tragic, horrific and delightful by turns. I am amazed that the narrative can dwell for several pages on something like a pea that has been stuck in someone's ear for years. I recommend that you take a few days to read this. Then on return a friend lent us a DVD of Sting (All This Time) rehearsing then performing at his villa in Tuscany. What made this compelling was that the events occurred when we were staying less than 15 miles away. What makes this interesting here is that Sting described how little time he has to get his message across. "Two verses, a chorus and perhaps a Coda" he said. So here I am trying to get my point across and being pulled in two totally opposite writing styles to provide information and to entertain. So what is my point? This is the Rambling section...Do I need a point?

The Rambler rambles on...

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

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