

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Orangewood Wines' Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 43 September 23, 2014

Introduction

The autumnal equinox is upon us. Actually, it's today. This fires the starting gun for the sprint through the final 3 months of the year, as we do one third of our annual business in the last three months. It is also time to adjust those wine cooler thermostats to allow the stored wines to begin a long, if microscopic, inhale like the caves of northern hemisphere. (See the [August 2011 Newsletter](#) for a long discussion of why you might adjust the temperature.)

There is no Wine Topic this month - with 3 new wineries and 2 new sales people, I thought that you would appreciate a break. The Editor (that would be Laurie) certainly appreciated it.

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New Customers

[Anthem Golf & Country Club](#)

2708 West Anthem Club Drive
Anthem, AZ 85086
(623) 742-6200

[Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar](#)

Locations: Chandler, Peoria, Scottsdale (2), Tucson

[La Mia Toscana Italian Kitchen](#)

7332 North Oracle Road
Tucson, AZ 85704
(520) 742-4242

[PF Chang's China Bistro](#)

Locations: Chandler, Goodyear, Mesa, Peoria, Phoenix,
Scottsdale (2), Tempe, Tucson

New Wineries

There had been a trend, at least in my mind, towards small wineries taking more responsibility for their marketing. This has been in response to the large importers and conglomerates. The three new wineries below all fall into this category. Rather than relying on an importer to worry about distribution of the products across the USA, they either have someone here full time or are willing to visit a lot. With the Orangewood Wines' approach of taking responsibility for selling, and relying on regular training from the winery, this is working well.

Avignonesi is based in Cortona, on the eastern border of Tuscany in Italy. They are not within the Chianti Classico region of Tuscany, so your expectations should be different. They do have several Sangiovese based wines, including a quite lovely Vino Nobile di Montepulciano. The story behind us starting to work with Avignonesi is complex, but briefly...one of my customers, Old Town Wine Cellar in Yuma, was organizing a group visit to Cortona for next summer. Part of the planning involved setting up winery visits. Being nearby, it made sense to approach Avignonesi. Avignonesi said their wines were no longer distributed in Arizona and asked for a recommendation...

Elena Walch (as alluded to in last month's newsletter) is a wine producer from the Alto Adige region, the northernmost wine region in Italy. While Südtirol/Alto Adige represents only 0.7% of Italy's total production, it leads the country in wine meriting a DOC designation: 98% of its wines fall into this category. Elena and her husband, Werner Walch, are the fourth generation making wine here, and they are working to hand off to their daughters. (The first generation was Wilhelm, who purchased the winery/monastery from the Jesuits in 1869.) The vineyards are farmed sustainably - a key requirement when they must produce for five generations. For 14 consecutive years the Italian wine guide, "Gambero Rosso" (Red Shrimp), has found Elena's Gewürztraminer worthy of "Tre Bicchieri" (Three Glasses), their highest award. That has led to her title of Queen of Gewürztraminer.

Paxton is a winery owned by the Paxton Family. David Paxton has been a viticulturist for 40 years, running his own vineyard and managing others. Based in McLaren Vale, Australia, he supplied fruit to folks like Penfold's, Wolf Blass and Molly Dooker. Seven years ago, his sons began making wine with grapes from the family vineyards. Son Michael is the winemaker and Ben is operations manager. They are starting a new wave of Australian wines that emphasize quality, organic and biodynamic production rather than quantity and low price. Their wines are high quality, their prices are reasonable, and we appreciate the commitment that goes into the organic and biodynamic regimens.

New Sales People

In the last month we lost two of our sales people but have replaced them. What we offer to our sales people is flexibility. This is ideal for people who have other commitments - like children or other jobs. The key is that flexibility is OK, but to be successful, there must be enough time available to develop relationships with actual customers, who also have time constraints and

expectations on how they would like to be treated. Our two lost sales people found that their other jobs and commitments left them too little time to maintain existing relationships. Our recruits tend to be wine enthusiasts, hospitality folk, wine retail people and escapees from other distributors.

Andria Bunnell has been a hospitality “folk” forever. She recognizes the different perspective of selling to someone who has arrived at her restaurant as compared to selling to someone who works at the restaurant and has other things to do. Andria is taking over the Central Phoenix territory but continuing with her regular evening job at a restaurant.

Diane Williamson has previously worked for two of the big guy distributors as well as a high tech company. She knows that she likes selling wine in this environment and is enthusiastic about sharing her knowledge. Diane takes over the Flagstaff territory and continues to consult to others in the wine industry.

Rambling

Last month I rambled about the Lorenz Transformation and Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity. I had a tremendous response from you all, appreciating that I had opened your eyes to what these things were and how eloquent I was in doing so. In my dreams I got such a response! The actual responses were a little light on compliments. So, this month I will not be attempting to explain Maxwell's Laws of Electromagnetism.

I did receive quite few enquiries about how the ark was coming along, especially after the record one day rainfall last week. We essentially had 50% of our annual rainfall in one day, actually in 2 or 3 hours of that day. Freeways and schools were closed, all kinds of excitement.

I am looking forward to cooler weather - it should be soon. For several weeks now I have been training for another half marathon. I am gradually increasing my mileage and would appreciate something less than 80F at 5:00am.

The Rambler jogs slowly on...

Cheers,

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

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