

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Orangewood Wines' Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 8
May 9, 2011

Introduction

Hooray! Hooray! the 1st of May. Or so. It has been a great year so far. We have only just turned on the air conditioning (at home that is, the warehouse has it on year round). Sales in April were a little below what I had expected, but still robust. Such sales keep rolling for the next month or two, while we feel like Wile E. Coyote beyond the precipice, waiting for gravity (summer) to take effect. Then it's get ready for the fall in September or October.

Box Score

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

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New Restaurants

[The Country Club at DC Ranch](#)

9290 East Thompson Peak Parkway
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
(480) 342-7200

[The Herb Box at Southbridge, Old Town Scottsdale](#)

7134 East Stetson Drive,

Scottsdale, AZ 85251
(480) 289-6160

New Wineries

[New Winery - Husch Vineyards](#)

This Mendocino County winery was founded in 1971 in Anderson Valley. Still run by the same family, but more recent generations, they invited us to taste their wines because it seemed that we knew where Mendocino County was being as how we represent Greg Graziano. They sent us a set of samples and we loved all the white wines feeling that with summer approaching some people feel the need to drink white. The first shipment is on its way to Arizona as I type - but faster.

Wine Terminology of the Month - Breathing

I was perusing some of our early Newsletters in search of inspiration for this one. One paragraph that I came across was titled "Breathing Lessons". I liked what it said so much because it was the beginning of the Orangewood philosophy of helping people enjoy wines without being pretentious - for example using words like "pretentious". Anyway, here it is from February 2002:

One of the questions that I was asked (by Frank) at the Epicurean Wine tasting had to do with letting wine breathe. Should you? Shouldn't you? Does it depend on the wine? How long should you do it? And so forth. I suggested that getting my opinion or a real expert's opinion, for that matter, is not especially helpful. What I suggested was a little scientific method. As a starting point, when a bottle is opened it should be sampled from time to time to see if you notice a change. If not, this wine doesn't need to breathe. This works if there are only two of you because the bottle of wine may last for several hours. If there are more of you, another approach would be to have two bottles; open one an hour or two early and then compare them when you open the second bottle. The key here is not "Do wines improve with breathing?" but, rather, whether a particular wine improves for you. That said, the first time we were in Italy we were with a friend who convinced us all that one bottle of wine was corked, i.e., spoiled by a bad cork. So, determined to exchange the bottle, Dick practiced the Italian phrase for "This wine is corked" ("Questo vino sta di tappo") all evening. The next morning, off we went (Dick and I) to try out his phrase. The long and short of it was that the overnight breathing made this wine gorgeous. The lady at the Enoteca tried it and explained what had happened. She did exchange our bottle and she did remind us, and the rest of the store, to let it breathe for at least an hour or two before drinking.

What would I add to that after another 9 years in "the business"? Not much. There are all kinds of devices these days to speed up the breathing process. Often called aerators they do that by bubbling air through the wine or spinning it through a vortex. They are cute and effective - if you feel a need to speed up the process. These are similar in effect to decanting a wine. I think it was the Wall Street Journal that once answered the question "When should you use a decanter?" with "When the person who gave it to you is visiting."

Rambling

From time to time in the rambling section I talk about how the market is doing. As I grope for words on the subject this month I feel a little like Ben Bernanke measuring the phrase and the impact. Don't want to be too optimistic, all the wineries we represent will be along asking for another order. Don't want to be too pessimistic and discourage the consumers who read this newsletter. A couple of years ago we were seeing the recession earlier than it was announced. Last April we felt we were finally pulling out of it - and the last 12 months have been the best we have ever recorded. Now, however, as we begin the transition to the usually soft Arizona Summer months, I am seeing that while the wine industry has had a positive attitude over the last 12 months, the right foot has been hovering over the brake pedal determined to avoid too much inventory. The first signs of the out of state license plates heading north and our customers put their check books away and our competitors rushed to offer unbelievable deals to get their inventories down to acceptable summer levels. Are we sliding back into recession? Probably not, but if we are, everyone is determined to be better positioned than 2 years ago. Orangewood's survival skills are still good. Recognizing that this sounds a bit gloomy, I realize why I don't have Ben Benake's job.

The Rambler rambles on...

Contact Information

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Orangewood Wines