

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Orangewood Wines' Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 9
June 11, 2011

Introduction

The temperature has hit 100F, though May was generally very nice - based on our seasonally adjusted expectations. The good weather continues into June with overnight temperatures still compatible with open windows and no air conditioning. Nonetheless, the snow birds are either gone or packing their cars. We did look at the temperatures in Minneapolis and Columbus, Ohio this morning - they are close to 100F, also, but without the benefit of a dry heat. Our sales in May met our expectations - also seasonally adjusted.

Box Score

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

Contents

[New Wine Stores/Wine Bars](#)

[Wine Terminology of the Month - Capsules](#)

[Rambling](#)

New Wine Stores/Wine Bars

[Wine Styles](#)

10625 North Tatum Boulevard
Phoenix, AZ 85028
(480) 922-4771

Wine Terminology of the Month - Capsules

You may be hearing a lot about capsules over the next year or so, To give you some background, I have pulled together my thoughts and done a little (very little) research. What is a capsule, if you are an oenophile rather than a botanist? It's that stuff around the neck of a wine bottle that needs to be

removed, at least partially before the cork can be removed. Often it is metallic, but wax or plastic are common, too. It is possible to remove corks without worrying about the capsule at all. Screw through it as if it were not there then pull the cork out in the usual way. This will leave a ragged edge to the foil, which I think is a little gauche. The fastest way to deal with the foil, former sales person Barbara taught me, is with a vertical slit up one side then remove the whole thing. When you are a busy waiter-person (like Barbara) this is effective. Another way to remove a high quality foil is to grip it and twist/pull it off - voilà! Jim Gullett from Vino Noceto taught me this - but he knows the quality of his foils. Generally, what I prefer to do is cut around the top of the neck as close as is convenient to the top, taking off just a disc of the capsule and leaving a clean shot at removing the cork. So much for what a capsule is and what to do with it. The next question is: why is it there at all? There are a few suggestions that it is to protect the corks from varmints. When cellars were caves in Europe and all the bottles were lying on their sides in open racks, it is quite plausible that rats would enjoy the corks. In today's air conditioned warehouses with the bottles packed in cases, the rat has a lot more to chew on before getting to the cork. So in today's world, maybe the capsule has become merely a tradition. A quick count at my nearby wine store suggested that 10% of wine bottles do not have them today. Capsules have become a hot topic recently because the price went up dramatically. Wineries are asking what is the point in having them. Is there a real benefit? Further, with the traditional tin foils, and no discernable recycling programs, is this a waste of planet earth resources for no good reason? One of our suppliers, who is trying hard to be more green (which is appropriate for Patricia Green Cellars) has put all this together and said "No more capsules for us". I think we will see that 10% number rise dramatically for 2011 vintages and beyond. Now you know why.

Rambling

In June 2001 we sold our first 3 bottles of wine to the then Territorial Bar and Grill in Cave Creek. This was a dive that Laurie and I visited a couple of times a week. When we put our business plan together we needed to know that we could sell our wine somewhere so we asked if they would buy our wine. "Of course" was the answer - why would they say no to regular customers. In hindsight we asked the wrong question. It should have been would they *sell* our wine, to which the observed answer was no - this is a Beer and Bloody Mary kind of joint. Still, they did buy the three bottles which was Invoice number 1001. It took 3 1/2 years to get to Invoice 2001 - quite a struggle. Nowadays we do 1000 invoices every few months. We keep records of all this stuff. We also have records of all the numbers on the checks used to pay each invoice. One time the invoice number was the same as the check number. I watch for these things - it's doesn't take much to amuse me. The other part of the Territorial Bar and Grill story was that we invited some of our friends - maybe all our friends but only a few came - to help spur sales. We took along a sample of the wine (Vino Noceto 1998 Sangiovese Riserva) to help the guests try the wine. We also bought a

bottle. I think someone else did too. We had good time. Someone suggested that we should start a newsletter... I'm wondering if we should have a re-enactment of that first get together. If there are any of the original attendees interested, let me know.

The Rambler rambles on...

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