

**Subject:** Wine at Orangewood Consulting 26, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 8, 2002 8:45 PM

To our Wine Aficionados,

### **Summary (Box Score)**

Two new restaurants sign up:

House of Tricks, 114 East Seventh Street, Tempe

The Rose, 234 S. Cortez in Prescott

### **Content**

Outline for the remainder of this newsletter

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### **Sales Ramble**

We are heading home from Telluride after a weekend helping the Johnstone Inn innkeeper close his inn. We have been staying there every year for ten years, so he invited us to celebrate. The aspens are turning yellow, more so after a weekend of rain and snow than before. A little mist hangs in the valley alongside the road. Miles Davis is adding to the ambiance and we have fun driving through a herd of cows. The cowboys create a pocket for us to drive into and eventually through the herd. My fingers feel a ramble coming on...

While much of what a wine distributor does is concerned with logistics – transportation, storage, inventory levels and so forth – the toughest part has turned out to be convincing restaurants and wine shops to carry the wine and to continue to carry the wine. There are a number of tactics that work some of the time - whether they are working or not is a judgment call, and I have little confidence in my ability to make correct calls. One of the tactics is persistence. After identifying a restaurant, say, as one that has room on its wine list for one or more Orangewood Consulting wines; making sure that the pricing is compatible; and trying to determine that the place helps customers select wines, persistence means showing up again and again trying to get an order. This, in theory, gives the potential customer confidence that they will be well treated once an order has been placed. In some cases this works. In other cases it feels as if the potential customer is playing the Monty Python cheese shop game. You know, the one where John Cleese is trying to guess what cheese is available at the store (there is none) and the purveyor has to have a different excuse for each cheese. "Normally sir yes, but the van broke down", "The cat ate it" and so on. In one case I became convinced that this was happening, and that the owner and his wine guy were betting how long they could string me along. I don't go there anymore.

The CD is playing Tracy Chapman's Fast Car. It takes me back to a restaurant called "No Name Restaurant" in Bruges, Belgium. I'm eating onion soup and hearing the artist and the track for the first time. This was 1989 and I have rambled too far.

### **Sales Associate batting 1000**

Dick made his first sales call to the **House of Tricks** in Tempe. The restaurant is run by Bob and Robyn Trick. This is a fine restaurant serving eclectic food close to downtown Tempe. (What does eclectic mean? It means that they put great food together in interesting and unusual combinations.) Dick took along our Vino Noceto and RustRidge offerings. He is most familiar with these wines and can therefore represent them well. They ordered the Sangioveses – both Normale and Riserva. Their plan is to serve the Normale in the bar by the glass and the Riserva by the bottle on the dinner menu. I delivered the wine the next morning. They also plan to carry the Zinfandel in the future. An outstanding beginning. How was he so successful his first time out? He was genuinely enthusiastic about the products. (Having known the owners for 25 years may have helped, too.)

### **Prescott Sales Efforts (continued)**

In the last newsletter I mentioned an aborted appointment with Chuck at **The Rose** in Prescott. When I called to make another appointment, Chuck was very apologetic. He said he had not had my phone number to contact me to cancel. I scheduled another appointment. When I arrived 10 minutes early, Linda panicked and called Chuck's home and cell phone numbers leaving messages. Chuck, however, arrived right on time. In the meantime I was able to enjoy the wonderful kitchen smells and to open the wines in preparation for the tasting. I brought the Noceto Sangiovese Normale and Frivolo. Linda's full name, by the way, is Linda Rose. I suspect that this may be the source of the restaurant name. Chuck had told me he didn't care for boutique wines – too expensive and not very available. I promised him these wines were both reasonably priced and I would work to keep them available for him year round. We started with the Frivolo – which he liked a lot. He had Linda try it, too. A winner. The Sangiovese was also well received after a little palate cleansing – Chuck brought out some garlic bread. Chuck said he would buy a case of each, which I just happened to have in the cooler in the car, along with an invoice. I do like dealing with wine people who can make a decision. As our friend Mark once told me, the best answer is "yes", the second best is "no". Taking a lot of time because the buyer is uncomfortable saying "no" only wastes both of our time. As I was wrapping up the tasting, a lady selling advertising showed up. She commented that selling wine looked a lot more fun. (If only I could figure out a way to cash in on this envy angle...)

I also had an appointment at Murphy's. Fargo is the bar manager there. She also enjoyed the Frivolo, and I left the remainder of the bottle with her so that she could give her general manager a taste. I will be following up prior to my next trip.

Finally, for dinner we treated our nephew – a freshman at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott – to Langostino, an Italian restaurant and potential candidate for a future sales call. They were somewhat formal; our waiter wore a black bowtie and other accoutrements of sartorial formality. Service was good, as was the food. The wine menu was a little strange, however. Instead of focusing on the winemakers' names, it had things like Merlot, Italy. Only the Chianti Classico had a brand – Antinori. The price was significantly lower than would be compatible with our Il Poggiolino Chianti Classico Riserva, so I think I will cross this place off my list.

### **Pending Wine Sales**

In the area of sales persistence, there is one campaign of note: Fleming's in Scottsdale. This is a place that I entertained a visitor from Austin (for the management consulting side of the business) back in the summer of 2001. The restaurant is actually called Fleming's Steakhouse and Wine bar. (Give them a call - they say the whole name each time when answering.) My filet was wonderful. Watch out for the matchstick fries – there are enough for 3 or 4 people in one order. Their approach to serving wine is outstanding. When you order a bottle, they decant it for you, allowing it to be ready to drink a little sooner than leaving it in the bottle. They provide Bordeaux sized glasses so that there is plenty of swirl room and an opening big enough for the largest proboscis.

The wine guy is Scott Yanni, and he is one of the nicest guys I know in the business. I have only met him three times, yet he remembers me, my name, my wines and the fact that I left my corkscrew there the first time he tasted my wines. The second time he tasted I left my corkscrew at home. It keeps me feeling like an amateur – but you can't tell from the friendly way I am treated by Scott. The first time (in 2001) I took the Noceto and RustRidge wines – it was all that I had. He liked the RustRidge Zinfandel and promised to add it to the menu once there was a space on the list. I have been calling him every month since then, but corporate has been changing the rules on him and making it difficult for him to find room. This time I took along the Marinda Park and Domain Coteau. I call this the story of two Pinot Noirs. They are so different. Domain Coteau is soft and French style. Marinda Park is tannic and strongly structured. It is difficult not to have opinions on one or the other. Scott promised to add the Marinda Park Pinot Noir once he has sold through one of the half cases that he has in stock. I'll be calling back.

### **Marinda Park COLA**

Marinda Park unearthed an old version of a special formula and believes that they can take on giants Coca Cola and Pepsi Cola. :- ) Actually, COLA stands for Certificate Of Label Approval and is issued by the BATF (Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms). As part of the process of importing a wine into the USA, we need a COLA. Minor changes, such as year of vintage, don't require a new COLA, but a new varietal does. We have just received approval for Marinda Park's new Sauvignon Blanc. They will be labeling and bottling it shortly, and it should be available in Arizona early in the New Year. Initial feedback from the winemaker is that he is very pleased with its progress.

### **Website**

Laurie has added more newsletters to the website, updated the new restaurants and added links to restaurant websites. Feel free to check it out at <http://www.orangewoodconsulting.com/wine.html> and to send us feedback. Mark, another Mark, suggested that we should add some photographs. We'll add it to the Phase 2 Requirements.

### **Feedback**

We have been getting quite a bit of feedback on the last two or three newsletters. It certainly is encouraging. One email in particular was very helpful. Someone has a brother who is in charge of operations at one of the Kierland restaurants. (Thank you Lori).

Cin-cin, alla salute!

Richard and Laurie

Richard (newsletter writer) and Laurie Corles (editor)  
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