

Orangewood Wines

Small Wineries, Great Wines

Volume 7 Issue 6 --- January 23, 2022

Introduction

We have finally got through 2021, the second year of this pandemic. Fortunately, people are still consuming wine, some of it supplied by Orangewood. Our sales continue to rise and we predict another growth year ahead of us.

Leslie is taking a month off, so I get to Ramble more than usual.

New Wineries

I have written in the past about Orangewood's methodology for selecting new wineries. With our in-boxes full of unsolicited requests for representation, we apply some simple algorithms to whittle things down. Emails addressed to "undisclosed recipients" do not make the cut. Prospective partners need to be able to use the phone and email, be willing to help with collateral, do market visits, make discounts for special programs. For fun and giggles I have been exploring how we came to select the suppliers that we do have. As I have an archive of all the emails over the last 25 years, it was a fun exercise to see the initial exchanges. Often they start with "good talking to you today". Many times it's "I was talking to a winery that recommended you" or "Some wine retailers in Arizona suggested that Orangewood would be a good fit". One time, someone said he got my card at an event and held on to it for years in case he one day started his own winery. (Yes Joe, that was you.) The overall result is that our suppliers have been with us for an average of over six years. We added three last year (Eberle, Kindred and Laureate) and lost two (one stopped operations, the other did not work out).

Looking through all those emails, I see how much of a partnership we have with our suppliers. Rarely do we make spectacular progress. Sometimes it takes several years before we get traction in the marketplace. Thank you to all our suppliers for your understanding and patience.

For this year Leslie is talking to someone who was recommended by one of our customers (yes, Raini), who answers email, can operate a phone and is looking for a long-term partnership. Samples are on the way!

The Rambler

Here we are in January 2022. Variant Omicron is all over Arizona and we have had record high infection numbers. With perhaps 25% of Arizonans expected to get Omicron in January alone, I don't need to be a great prognosticator to foresee a drop off pretty soon. Then we can look forward to the next variant. I'm guessing it will be called "Oink". (φ)

With all the misery of covid, in retrospect and prospect, not to mention politics (oops, I'm not to mention that), and social media acting as a misery accelerant, it's hard to take the time to reflect on happy memories, to plan joyful activities and to live in the moment. I remember hearing a claim that all our best memories involve alcohol. There are two ways to think about this. One is that a little alcohol is relaxing. I believe that it reduces how much multitasking you can do and thus allows you to focus on the event of the moment, making it more fun and memorable. The second is that the aromas of a wine can act as a memory jogger. The Noceto Frivolo (Moscato) has aromas of elderflower. My parents used to make sparkling wine from elderflowers. We would ramble through the brambles on the canal tow paths in Birmingham collecting the flowers. Just a sniff of Frivolo transports me back to that time in my childhood.

The rambler rambles on...

Cheers,

Richard and Laurie
Orangewood Wines