



# The Wine Press



Newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc.

Volume 44, Issue 1, January 2020

## President's Message

The very busy month of December is in the books. The fabulous Annual Holiday Dinner & Dance was once again enjoyed by our members with a *record* turnout. See Brian's article for details on this amazing evening. Our members showed off their dance steps even to the last song with great music from the "Three 2 Sevens." Thanks to all of you who generously donated gifts to the Costa Mesa Fire Department's "Spark of Love" children's toy drive. Thanks to Brian and Sue McDonald for their outstanding efforts in arranging this sold out event.

The Winemakers' Group Holiday Potluck was also a sold out event! Thank you to Kevin Donnelly for once again securing the beautiful lakeside site and the festive atmosphere created by the Scotts and McLeans. Delicious food and great wines were enjoyed by all!

The OCWS will once again have a busy schedule of events for 2020. I encourage you to note the upcoming events on your personal 2020 calendars so you do not miss out on events of interest to you. We have a wide variety of activities for our members with details in the related articles. The "Save the Date" column provides the dates of all upcoming events. Most of our recent events have had waitlists, and all events have online sign-ups. Please call the OCWS office should you need assistance.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we wish you a very happy and healthy New Year. Please remember to drink responsibly and consider using a designated driver or ride service. Cheers!

- Bill Redding, President

## Winemakers Newsroom

The Winemakers' Group members have completed most of their crush-season tasks, and our 2019 wines are put down to rest for a while. Our 2018 wines tasted wonderful with our Thanksgiving dinners!

**Post Crush Seminar Recap.** Several of our newbie winemakers met on November 16 and talked about several techniques and received hands-on experience with some winemaking equipment, which makes the job easier.

**Winemakers' Group Holiday Potluck Recap.** This event has become so popular that when we opened sign-ups on the website, we sold out in eight hours. 100 people attended the event overlooking the beautifully

decorated lake in Yorba Linda. The potluck and home wines were awesome, and thanks to Irene Scott and Linda McLean for the room decorations! A great time was had by all.

This month, we will be putting together our Winemakers' Group Plan for 2020 and the OC Fair's Home Wine Competition.



We are always looking for new members to learn winemaking. If you have any questions, contact Kevin at 714.457.7229 or by emailing him at [KevinDonnelly@ocws.org](mailto:KevinDonnelly@ocws.org).

- Kevin Donnelly

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## January Winery Program: Dark Star Cellars

Friday, January 17, 2020  
Dinner starts @ 6:30 pm  
Avenue of the Arts  
3350 Avenue of the Arts  
Costa Mesa, CA



Our 2020 Winery Program starts with Dark Star Cellars, an award-winning winery in Paso Robles. Dark Star was established in 1994 and is conveniently located two miles west of the 101, just off of the 46 on Anderson Road.

Visitors often can run into winemaker Michael Emling pouring at the tasting bar. Mike makes small lots of premium, hand-crafted wines, including traditional Bordeaux and Rhône styles, creative California blends, and some things not everyone has—Montepulciano, Tempranillo, Viognier, Roussanne, Rosé of Grenache, and Port. Their menu presently includes about 20 different varietals and blends.

Dark Star is pet and family friendly. Guests can check out their observation beehive, ax throwing pitch, free-range chickens, and winery cats. The knowledgeable owners are friendly, very welcoming and treat you like family. The cost of the buffet meal remains the same as last year and is \$40 for members and \$45 for guests.

This buffet meal includes:

- Roasted Breast of Chicken with Harissa, Preserved Lemons, Chickpeas and Mint Orzo Pasta and Charred Asparagus
- Greek Salad with Romaine Lettuce, Roma Tomatoes, Kalamata Olives, Feta Cheese, Red Onions, Sun Dried Tomatoes, House Made Croutons and Basil Lemon Vinaigrette

We offer a separate option of a “Heart Healthy” sit-down meal for \$45 for members and \$50 for guests. This selection includes:

- Grilled Salmon with Olives, Capers, Sun Dried Tomatoes and Fresh Mint, Quinoa with Fresh Herbs and Charred Asparagus

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*The Orange County Wine Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California with its principal place of business in Costa Mesa, California.*

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## A French Dine with Wine: Pescadou Bistro

Wednesday, January 29, 2020 @ 6:30 PM  
Pescadou Bistro  
3325 Newport Boulevard, Newport Beach, CA

Bonjour! We will have a small, intimate dinner in a French bistro with a spirit that has been called “uncompromisingly French, casual and just plain fun.” Upon walking into Pescadou Bistro, guests are immediately greeted by two things—a romantic and casual dining room that evokes the warmth and welcome of France’s southern region, and the equally warm welcome of the owner’s “Bon Soir!”



**Attendance Particulars.** Attendance is limited to 20 people. The office will confirm your attendance or place you on a waitlist. Please bring a bottle of wine per person to share and your

own wine glass. Be sure to drink responsibly and remember to wear your name tag.

**SORRY THIS EVENT IS  
SOLD OUT**

**Sold out—please phone the OCWS office to be placed on the waitlist.** As we need to contract with the restaurant in advance with the number of meals, the last day to cancel and receive a refund is Wednesday, January 22. Any cancellations after this date would be filled and refunded from the waitlist.

**Parking.** Street parking has been replaced by new city public parking at the corner of Newport Blvd. and 32nd Street. It’s free after 6:00 pm as well as any street parking in the area that has meters. **DO NOT PARK** in the small private parking lot between the public parking and the “Las Fajitas” Mexican restaurant – they tow away! In addition, do not park in the Pavilion Shopping Center.

- Rich Skoczylas, Director

## Wine Education Seminar: Intro to Wine and Wine Tasting

We are continuing our very popular monthly Wine Education Seminars in 2020!

The January seminar, “Intro to Wine and Wine Tasting,” is a two-hour class that will review the basics of wine production, wine tasting, recognizing and understanding wine labels from around the world, as well as learning to hone the palate for discerning consumers.



And, of course, tasting wine from around the world! Six wines will be tasted in class. Be confident and savvy in exploring

new wines and new regions, starting with the basics.

This seminar is scheduled for Thursday, January 9, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in Costa Mesa. The cost is \$49 per person and is limited to OCWS members only.

Sign-ups, with additional details, will be located on the OCWS website. Sign up early as the seminar is limited to 40 people.

We are excited to offer these educational opportunities to our members. Future seminars will cover classic wine making regions and grape varietals.

- Irene Scott, Wine Education Chair

## New Member Portal



The Orange County Wine Society extends a warm welcome to its newest members! Membership for the following new members was approved by the Board of Directors at the December 2019 meeting:

Michelle Flores & Eric Marson • Allie Malina & Joe Kolinsky  
Maggie Thompson • Wanda Andreas & Scott Chappell  
Saune Hand

As of December 1, the Wine Society had 1,065 members.

**New Member Info.** If you are thinking about attending an event and are not sure how to dress, what to bring, how it works, or just want someone to meet and greet, please reach out to any member of the Board of Directors, feel free to phone Brian directly at 714.227.7284, or email the “New Member Hotline” at [Brian@ocws.org](mailto:Brian@ocws.org).

- Brian McDonald, Director & Membership Chair

## February Winery Program: Crystal Basin Cellars

Friday, February 7, 2020  
Dinner starts @ 6:30 pm  
Avenue of the Arts Hotel  
3350 Avenue of the Arts  
Costa Mesa, CA



Crystal Basin Cellars boasts the best wine production team in the Sierra Foothills who create the most flavorful wines from local fruit. They provide a

winetasting experience that is one part fun, one part information, and a price-to-value that is second to none. They call this style of service “legendary Foothill hospitality!”

Red wines at Crystal Basin are crafted from grapes grown within 30 miles of the winery, in the El Dorado appellation. Growers bring the winery 15 different red grape varieties, and they process them in their historic facility. The winery, a 100-year-old building, has been a pear barn, a box manufacturing facility and an apple barn—and now it’s a grape barn! In fact, the building was the second winery to be licensed in El Dorado County after the end of Prohibition.

El Dorado grapes were originally planted by the gold miners in the 1850s and 1860s. These hearty vines created a legacy that is followed today to produce the best wines that showcase the amazing flavors created by the soil, climate and precipitation. Access to such a wide variety of grapes allows Crystal Basin to create varietal wines from individual grapes because they create the most flavorful wines from their unique, high-altitude growing environment.



The cost of the buffet meal remains the same as last year and is \$40 for members and \$45 for guests.

This buffet meal includes:

- Roasted Chicken with Mustard, Fresh Basil and Garlic, Garlic Mashed Potatoes and Seasonal Heirloom Baby Vegetables
- Mixed Baby Greens with Sun Dried Cranberries, Fresh Raspberries, Goat Cheese and Glazed Walnuts

We offer a separate option of a “Heart Healthy” sit-down meal for \$45 for members and \$50 for guests.

The “Heart Healthy” selection includes:

- Grilled Branzino on Butternut Squash Puree with Herb Salad, Roasted Butternut and Squash Hash
- Mixed Baby Greens with Sun Dried Cranberries, Fresh Raspberries, Goat Cheese and Glazed Walnuts

Sign up on the OCWS website to attend this event. Attendees can either self-park in the hotel garage and get their ticket validated at OCWS check-in or pay \$10 for valet parking. Dinner begins at 6:30 pm with the meeting following about 7:15 pm.

**New Members.** If you joined after our May 2019 tasting and attend your first Winery Program tasting in 2020, we will gift you with a bottle of wine.

**Volunteers Needed.** We need a couple of volunteers to help with check-in. Please indicate you can help when you sign up to attend this event.

Members may bring their own wine to enjoy and share during dinner. Be sure to wear your nametag.

As we need to contract the meals with the hotel, the last day to sign up or cancel and receive a refund is Sunday, February 2. Any cancellations after this date would be filled and refunded from the waitlist.

- Rich Skoczylas, Winery Program Coordinator

*The Wine Press* is the official newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc. The newsletter is published monthly. *The Wine Press* welcomes input from the OCWS membership.

Forward comments, questions, and suggestions to [WinePress@ocws.org](mailto:WinePress@ocws.org).

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## January Winery Program: Dark Star Cellars

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- Greek Salad with Romaine Lettuce, Roma Tomatoes, Kalamata Olives, Feta Cheese, Red Onions, Sun Dried Tomatoes, House Made Croutons and Basil Lemon Vinaigrette

**Sign Up.** Sign up on the OCWS website to attend this event. Attendees can either self-park in the hotel garage and get their ticket validated at OCWS check-in or pay \$10 for valet parking. Dinner begins at 6:30 pm with the meeting following about 7:15 pm.

**New Members.** If you joined after our May 2019 tasting and

attend your first Winery Program tasting in 2020, we will gift you with a bottle of wine.

**Volunteers Needed.** We will need a couple of volunteers to help with check-in. Please indicate your availability to assist when you sign up to attend this event.

Members may bring their own wine to enjoy and share during dinner. Be sure to wear your nametag.

As we need to contract the meals with the hotel, the last day to sign up or cancel and receive a refund is Sunday, January 12. Any cancellations after this date would be filled and refunded from the waitlist.

- Rich Skoczylas, Winery Program Coordinator

## Mini-Tasting: Pinot Noir

Saturday, February 22, 2020

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Various Host Sites



Pinot Noir is the wine considered by many to be the “holy grail” of wine. This temperamental grape varietal requires warm daytime and cool evening temperatures and is partial to coastal climates. The

Burgundy region of France’s Cote d’Or is well known for Pinot Noir where only Chardonnay is planted in greater abundance. In California, plantings began in the 1940s with a significant push in Sonoma starting in the 1960s. Today, high quality Pinots are produced in Sonoma, Mendocino and Santa Barbara counties of California, as well as in Oregon and Washington.

Pinot Noir has great variation. One of the major factors affecting Pinot Noir is the amount of time spent in oak. From France, Pinot Noir is rustic, earthy, and acidic. From Sonoma, it’s lush with rich black cherry flavors and higher in alcohol than French Pinot Noir.

Pinot noir is a versatile wine. Lighter, fruitier wines pair well with salmon, fatty fish and pasta, or roasted chicken. The bigger, more tannic Pinots pair well with duck, game birds, and stews such as beef bourguignon.

**Hosts:** Mini-Tastings are held at various host sites around Orange County. If you would like to host this event, please email George Cravens at [George@ocws.org](mailto:George@ocws.org). You may need to sign up and pay until host sites are selected. Reimbursement will be made for all host sites.

**Locations:** Host sites and directions will be announced to those attending approximately one week prior to the event. We try to place you at the location nearest your home or to accommodate your specific site request; however, your assigned host site is also based on the order in which your sign-up is received in the OCWS office. The cost to attend the tasting is \$30 for members and \$35 for guests.

**Dish:** Each person/couple attending brings a potluck dish (appetizer, entrée, side dish, or dessert) to serve a small portion to 18 people. The dish ideally should be designed to match the theme of the tasting, in this case Pinot Noir. Please



coordinate your food selection with your host to assure an appropriate balance of food types served during the evening. There will be a special bottle of wine awarded that evening as a prize for Chef of the Evening. Our winning Chefs of the Evening can have their recipe published on the OCWS website.

We are planning a maximum of seven sites for this Mini-Tasting so the limit is 112 attendees, plus hosts. Due to the high attendance at our Mini-Tasting Programs, we encourage you to sign up early as sites tend to fill quickly.

Because of the advance purchase of wines, you will not receive a refund if you cannot attend. The cut-off date for online sign-up is Monday, February 10. After this date, please contact the OCWS office to determine availability. The cancellation deadline is Friday, February 14.

- Bon Appetit, George Cravens

## Champagne Brunch: Balboa Bay Resort

Sunday, February 16, 2020

11:00 am—2:00 pm

Balboa Bay Resort

1221 W. Coast Highway

Newport Beach, CA



If you are enjoying a long weekend or still want to spoil your Valentine, we are going to “kick it up a notch” for this next Champagne Brunch event.

The Balboa Bay Resort, on Pacific Coast Highway in Newport Beach, is a great place to relax and enjoy a glass of bubbly and experience the Balboa Bay Resort’s fine brunch options.

Brunch will be served in the Waterline restaurant. Below is a sampling of their

menu selections:

### UNLIMITED ACCESS OF COLD BUFFET:

Cheese and Charcuterie Display

Artisanal charcuterie & cheeses, assorted breads & crackers

Bread and Pastry Display

Assorted bread & breakfast pastries

Waterline Seafood Display

Fresh shrimp & crab claws, ceviche on ice,  
smoked salmon bagels

### CHOICE OF ONE HOT BRUNCH ENTRÉE:

CRAB EGGS BENEDICT

(2) two English muffins, crab cakes, asparagus, fennel pollen,  
signature hollandaise sauce, crab claw garnish

HALIBUT BLT

Grilled halibut, avocado, bacon, lavash, arugula

STEAK & EGG

Flat iron served with roasted potatoes, poached egg,  
arugula and chimichurri sauce

FITNESS FRITTATA

Egg white, mozzarella, organic tomato, mushroom  
asparagus, spinach, pesto

CHILAQUILES

Fried tortillas, salsa roja, avocado, crema,  
sunny side up egg

Dessert Display—assorted mini desserts

Served with unlimited complimentary  
One Hope sparkling wine or mimosas

Space is very limited for this event; we are being held to 20 reservations.

Parking is complimentary and corkage will be reduced to \$12.50. The price for the brunch will be \$70, all inclusive.

- Mel Jay, Event Chair & Rochelle Randel, Co-Chair

## Mini-Tasting: Big Reds Recap

On Saturday, November 23, *over* 102 members and guests attended the November Big Reds Mini-Tasting at seven host sites.

The blind tasting included five flights of two wines each. The flights covered Proprietary Reds, Petite Sirah, Syrah, Zinfandel, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Six of the ten wines finished in the top three at one or more sites. The three favorite wines are listed below:

- **1st Place:** 2015 Mount Peak Zinfandel Rattlesnake Vineyard, Sonoma—three first, one second, and two third place finishes—\$39.95
- **2nd Place:** NV Locations CA-7 Red Blends—two first, one second, and three third place finishes—\$17.95
- **3rd Place:** 2016 Jaffurs Petite Sirah, Santa Barbara County—two first and two second place finishes—\$31.99

In addition, attendees brought a delicious dish to share and then voted on a Chef of the Evening. The results of the Chef of the Evening at each host site are:

- **Hosts Chris & Hank Bruce:** Mary Mulcahey “Brownies”
- **Host Virginia & Karl Kawai:** Dino Amico “Chicken Scarpriello with Pickled Peppers”
- **Hosts Judy & Bob Koebnitz:** June & Vince Porto “BBQ Pepper Flank Steak”
- **Hosts Greg & Cathy Risling:** Laurie Preus “Thai Pumpkin Soup”
- **Hosts John & Denise Scandura:** Rich Skoczylas “Peach Bread Pudding with Amaretto Sauce”
- **Hosts Shelly & Ed Trainor:** Mary Giedzinski “Zinfandel Braised Short Ribs”
- **Hosts Dave & Barbara White:** Barbara White “Short Rib & Mushroom Lasagna”

Congratulations to all the winners! A big **thank you** to the hosts!

- George Cravens, Director

## March Winery Program: Fallbrook Winery

Friday, March 13, 2020  
Dinner starts @ 6:30 pm  
Avenue of the Arts Hotel  
3350 Avenue of the Arts  
Costa Mesa, CA



Nestled in the heart of Southern California is Fallbrook Winery. A visit to them is a short drive from Orange County where they rest between the Pacific Coast and the Pala Mesa Mountains and produce the

highest quality red and white varietals. The original Fallbrook Winery opened in 1981 and was used primarily for Champagne production through the late 1980s. In the mid 1990s, the winery started replanting with Bordeaux varietal clones including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Malbec.

The topography of the region creates an ideal microclimate, with warm days, cool nights, hillside vineyards and decomposed granite soil. The grapes develop the optimal sugar and acid levels needed to create rich, full-bodied and balanced wines. All red grapes are hand-picked and bin fermented to allow for optimal fermentation conditions. The manual punch downs during fermentation enhance the intensity of the fruit and permit the winemaker greater control over the winemaking process.

We are excited to have their Head Winemaker, Euen Parker, visit us for this tasting. Euen was educated in New Zealand and France and has consulted throughout Spain and the United States. He has won numerous awards at Fallbrook Winery and is a Judge in the Commercial Wine Competition.

The cost of the buffet meal is \$40 for members and \$45 for guests.



This buffet meal includes:

**Beef Stroganoff with Buttered Noodles  
and Seasonal Baby Vegetables**

**A salad of Baby Spinach Leaves with Pears,  
Toasted Walnuts & Goat Cheese  
with Tarragon Vinaigrette**

**Warm Artisan Breads and Rolls with Sweet Butter**

We offer a separate option of a "Heart Healthy" sit-down meal for \$45 for members and \$50 for guests. This selection includes:

**Pan Roasted Local Seabass  
with Orange Fennel Reduction**

**Garbanzo Bean Mash and Seasonal Baby Vegetables**

**A salad of Baby Spinach Leaves with Pears,  
Toasted Walnuts & Goat Cheese  
with Tarragon Vinaigrette**

**Warm Artisan Breads and Rolls with Sweet Butter**

Sign up on the OCWS website to attend this event. Attendees can either self-park in the hotel garage and get their ticket validated at OCWS check-in or pay \$10 for valet parking. Dinner begins at 6:30 pm with the meeting following about 7:15 pm.

**New Members:** If you joined after our May 2019 tasting and you attend your first Winery Program tasting in 2020, we will gift you with a bottle of wine.

**Volunteers Needed:** We need a couple of volunteers to help with check-in. Please indicate you can help when you sign up to attend this event. Members may bring their own wine to enjoy and share during dinner. Be sure to wear your nametag.

As we need to contract the meals with the hotel, the last day to sign up or cancel and receive a refund is Sunday, March 8. Any cancellations after this date would be filled and refunded from the waitlist.

*- Rich Skoczylas, Winery Program Coordinator*

## OCWS Holiday Dinner & Dance Recap

I want to report that the 2019 Holiday Dinner & Dance was a success but I can't—it far exceeded a success! 137 members, a record number of people attending, danced the night away to the fantastic music of the "Three 2 Sevens." The dance floor was overflowing for every dance, even to the very last dance, and people were dancing in the aisles. The band played music that just made you want to get up and dance! The food was fantastic and the wines were equally fantastic, if not better. If you missed it, you missed the *best OCWS party ever!*

Mark your calendar for next year, tentatively set for Friday, December 5, 2020.

*- Brian McDonald, Director*





## *The Wine Press*

Orange County Wine Society, Inc.  
PO Box 11059  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

### **OCWS Save the Date Calendar**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| January 9   | Wine Education Seminar: Intro to Wine and Wine Tasting |
| January 17  | Winery Program: Dark Star Cellars                      |
| January 29  | Dine with Wine: Pescadou Bistro                        |
| February 7  | Winery Program: Crystal Basin Cellars                  |
| February 13 | Wine Education Seminar: Wine and Chocolate Pairing     |
| February 16 | Champagne Brunch: Balboa Bay Resort                    |
| February 22 | Mini-Tasting Program: Pinot Noir                       |
| March 13    | Winery Program: Fallbrook Winery                       |
| April 4     | OCWS Wine Auction                                      |
| April 17    | Winery Program: Eberle Winery                          |
| May 8       | Winery Program ZD Wines                                |



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