



The Wine Press



Newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc.

Volume 44, Issue 2, February 2020

President's Message

We are embarking on our 44th year with the OCWS which was already jam-packed with events in January. Our members attended the Winery Program featuring Dark Star Cellars, the Wine Education Seminar—Intro to Wine and Wine Tasting, and a Dine with Wine event at Pescadou Bistro.

This time of year brings the start of a new cycle for the OCWS when we begin to plan and prepare for the Annual Wine Auction, Commercial Wine Competition, Home Wine Competition and, of course, The Courtyard at the OC Fair & Event Center during the Fair. This year, the Fair will be in session from July 17 through August 16.

All of these events take a tremendous amount of time and energy. To everyone who has participated in the past and will be

participating this coming year, *thank you!*

I would also like to call your attention to the recent trend of *"sold out"* events. Please plan ahead by looking at the Save the Date and Upcoming Events sections which are usually found on the first and last pages of *The Wine Press*. Upcoming events are more detailed in each edition of the newsletter.

Also, please be sure to check your profile in your account to be sure it is up-to-date. This can be done after logging in and using the drop down My Account>My Profile. We rely on your accurate information to send out the newsletter and notifications to event attendees.

Cheers!

- *Bill Redding, President*

Wine Education Seminar: Wine, Chocolate and Other Perfect Pairings



Like a perfect couple, wine and food are made to go together. In this two-hour class, come explore and unpack the mysteries behind what makes certain wines pair well with specific foods and how to create your own perfect pairings. Learn about the five basic tastes and how these can work with or against your food and wine pairings. We will also taste some delicious chocolates as we learn how they pair with different wines. The class will feature six wines with accompanying food morsels and chocolates.

This seminar is scheduled for Thursday, February 13, from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in Costa Mesa. The cost is \$49 per person. Sign-ups (with additional details) will be located on the OCWS website. Sign up early as the seminar is limited to 40 people. Due to limited seating, this is a *members-only* event.

- *Irene Scott, WSET-3, Wine Education Chair*

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Winemakers Newsroom

The OCWS Winemakers' Leadership Group has been busy planning our 2020 event calendar. Lots of meetings (aka parties), training events, and even some winery visits will be on the agenda.

We are always looking for participants and volunteers to host parties and to help with our OC Fair Home Wine Competition, which will be held on June 13 this year.

Be on the lookout for invitations regarding judging positions, stewarding and the other tasks required in coming months—get your home wines ready to submit!

Winemakers' Group Holiday Potluck Photos. On December 21, we had our 6th Annual Holiday Party. This popular event was sold out at 100 people, featuring great potluck food items and home-made wines, and everyone had a grand time!



We are always looking for new members to learn winemaking.

If you have any questions, contact Kevin by emailing him at KevinDonnelly@ocws.org or by phoning him at 714.457.7229.

- Kevin Donnelly



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.

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Wine Education 101: Winter Dormancy in the Vineyard



We all love to see beautiful vineyards at harvest - green, full vines with abundant clusters of red or green grapes. Harvest is an exciting time as the vines bring forth their bounty and then take a deep sigh of relief. Following harvest the vines decorate the landscape with vibrant hues of yellow and gold.

But sadly, the vines then give up their leaves to become brown, bare twigs in the ground by winter. But are these vines really

as lifeless as they appear? Contrary to their appearance, these vines have prepared themselves to survive and thrive during the cold winter months.

To read more about the mysterious lives of vines in the winter, continue reading at <https://ocws.org/category/wine-education/>.

- Irene Scott, WSET-3, Wine Education Chair



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. 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

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

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 January 2020 meeting:

Melinda & Jerry Coleman • Nancy & Walter Kuliland
Nancy Sweeney • Maria DeNatale Saros
Lianne DeGraw

As of January 1, the Wine Society had 1,038 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.

- Brian McDonald, Director & Membership Chair

OCWS Scholarship Season



The OCWS guidelines allow awarding of scholarships to students in the Viticulture, Enology, and Culinary Arts programs at select California degree colleges and universi-

ties. At present, seven colleges and/or universities are chosen; they are: Allan Hancock College, Orange Coast College, Cal Poly-Pomona, UC Davis, Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo, Napa Valley College of Enology, and CSU at Fresno. Donations made by the OCWS is one of the reasons most of us became members and have a wider appreciation of California wines. Annual disbursements are made to these seven schools from which the colleges and/or universities select the scholarship recipients.

For years, several of our OCWS scholarship colleges have submitted wines for judging at the Commercial Wine Competition and are consistent medal winners. The OCWS proudly pours these wines every year at The Courtyard during the OC Fair.

In fact, each year several students from the Orange Coast College Culinary Arts school judge at the OCWS's Annual Chili Cook-Off at The Courtyard. Every OCWS membership renewal includes \$12.50 toward the OCWS Scholarship Fund. As you renew your membership, you have the option to make an online donation to the college or university of your choice. Early each year, the "scholarship season," is a reminder for us to consider funding the Scholarship Account.

Online donations can be made on the OCWS website. Log in, click About / Scholarship Program / Scholarship Donations. Make a selection, then add to your cart and pay online. There is a choice of the colleges and/or universities where donations can be specifically allocated or equally distributed between all seven colleges. Once an allocation is made, you will be able to print a receipt of your donation.

Take a moment to check out the OCWS website. It is very easy to navigate and any donation will be greatly appreciated by the colleges for recipient students in the Viticulture, Enology, and Culinary Arts programs.

- *Leslie Hodowanec, Scholarship Chair*

OCWS Wine Auction

Saturday, April 4, 2020

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

OC Fair & Events Center

Huntington Beach Building (next to The Courtyard)

***** Please expect to be present for the entire event.**

No early check-outs! ***

The OCWS Wine Auction is right around the corner. This is a *members-only* opportunity to purchase outstanding wines of all varietals at great prices!



Place your bid in our silent auction, offering over 1,000, 4-bottle lots of wine in every varietal imaginable. You can also raise your bidder paddle for many premium lots in the live verbal auction.

The Wine Auction affords the OCWS Cellar Master a chance to clear out the cellar to make room for all the wine arriving for

the 2020 Commercial Wine Competition. This event also helps provide funding for this year's Commercial Wine Competition.

We will also be placing four wine bottles in a sealed box that you can pick up during checkout. You will receive 4 bottles for just \$20.

Bidder catalogues will be available the week before and during event check-in. This sale offers wine bargains galore! There will also be a nice selection of wines poured for your pleasure and plenty of food to keep you smiling throughout the day. For your convenience, it is suggested that you bring wine glasses and pens to the Wine Auction.

The price is \$20 per member. *One more thing ... only OCWS members may attend, no guests please.*

See you at the Auction!

- *Bill Redding, Auction Director/Cellar Master*

TIPS Alert!

It's time to start thinking about recertifying your TIPS certificate. If you are a new member, or have never taken TIPS training, you will need to attend a TIPS training class if you plan to volunteer at The Courtyard during the 2020 OC Fair. Class schedules will be available on the OCWS website in March. Stay tuned!

- *Rochelle Randel, TIPS Trainer & Marcy Ott, Badging Coordinator*

April Winery Program: Eberle Winery

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



EBERLE WINERY

The April Winery Program presents a winemaker who was introduced to Bordeaux wines, studied enology and earned a doctorate degree at UC Davis, pioneered the Paso Robles Wine Appellation, and became a star winemaker with an incredible 40+ year legacy. In 2019, he was awarded the esteemed Robert Mondavi Hospitality Award. This month we are honored to bring you a living legend, Gary Eberle.



Gary Eberle is considered a pioneer in the Paso Robles wine region. He landed in Paso Robles in the late 1970s with a mindset to produce Cabernet Sauvignon. Settling on 64 acres in the east side, he released his first Cabernet Sauvignon in 1979 and continues through today to produce fine Cabs that exceed expectations associated with the price.

Eberle's Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Syrah, Zinfandel wines, and various Rhone varietals have consistently won major awards at the OC Fair Commercial Wine Competition. We will taste several of Gary's wines this evening that made him a legend. This is one event that is definitely a *must* attend.

The evening we will feature a special sit-down, three-course dinner. The cost is \$53 for members and \$58 for guests. Members may bring their own wine to enjoy and share during dinner. Be sure to wear your nametag.



This is one event that is definitely a *must* attend.

The evening we will feature a special sit-down, three-course dinner. The cost is \$53 for members and \$58 for guests.

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

The menu for this evening includes:

Strawberry Salad with Lemon Dijon Vinaigrette
Baby Mixed Spring Greens, Fresh Strawberries,
Red Grapes, Sun Dried Cranberries,
Candied Walnuts and Feta Cheese
Warm Artisan Breads and Rolls with Sweet Butter

Entrees (Choose One)

Petit Top Sirloin

with a Mushroom Madeira Sauce, Potatoes Au Gratin
and Garlicky Lemon Parmesan Broccoli

Or

Panko Crusted Petit Salmon Filet

with Tuscan Tomato Sauce, Wild Rice Pilaf
and Garlicky Lemon Parmesan Broccoli

Dessert

New York Cheesecake

with Seasonal Fresh Berries and Wild Strawberry Coulis

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.

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

- Rich Skoczylas, Winery Program Coordinator

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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The Wine Press

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

OCWS Save the Date Calendar

- February 7 Winery Program: Crystal Basin Cellars
- February 13 Wine Education Seminar: Wine, Chocolate & Other Pairings
- February 16 Champagne Brunch: Balboa Bay Resort—Sold Out
- February 22 Mini-Tasting Program: Pinot Noir
- March 13 Winery Program: Fallbrook Winery
- March 19 Wine Education Seminar: Wines of Spain: Vida De Vino
- April 4 OCWS Wine Auction
- April 9 Wine Education Seminar: Wines of Germany and Austria
- April 17 Winery Program: Eberle Winery
- April 26 Champagne Brunch: Newport Landing
- May 8 Winery Program: ZD Wines
- May 14 Wine Education Seminar: US Wine Regions and Wines
- May 16 Spring Membership Event: The Great OCWS Bake Off
- May 30-31 Commercial Wine Competition
- June 13 OC Fair Home Wine Competition



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