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What is WineSpirit?

People exploring wine and its spiritual dimension

BREAKING NEW GROUND - UNEARTHING ANCIENT TRUTHS

WineSpirit is a blend of what is new and what is ancient. To explore the relationship and partnership of wine and spirituality is to respond to a modern urge to reduce the frenzy of fragmentation that pervades virtually everyone's life. It addresses the frustration of having more choices and less time than ever to make sense of all you do, let alone what you have no time to do. It is through an over 8000 year-old agricultural product, and insights gleaned over thousands of years of experience and wisdom connected with that fruit, that we enable ourselves to transform our lives and achieve integration and balance.

People around the world use wine to pause and celebrate friendships, relationships, and enjoyment of fine food. WineSpirit celebrates all avenues that enable you to stop now and again to treasure such moments. Understanding wine and its spiritual and cultural underpinnings can awaken you to new ways of thinking about work and values and to choose to breathe new life into old patterns and traditions.

What is WineSpirit's Origins?

WineSpirit began as a conversation between two Davids, a businessman and a member of the clergy. Both sought to integrate spirituality into the business of life, ongoing awareness and celebration of specialness in moments throughout each day. Without such integration, business and spiritual realms remain separated and isolated pieces, indicative of the fragmentation that characterizes much of people's daily life.

After several years search for integration, addressing matters of life balance and fragmentation, the Davids realized that the business of grape growing and wine production often

overshadowed the joy and blessing of doing such unusual farming. They understood that religious institutions / organizations had many items on the agenda, with spirituality but one among them.

From a business perspective it was amazing to reflect on how many are drawn to the vineyard as a calling, a special feeling for the grape and the magic that it produces, with the jackpot at the dinner table and crowned with a toast. They were not drawn to apples, bananas, berries or dates. They were drawn to vineyards. From a spiritual perspective wine throughout time has been the agent of choice to fulfill an obligation to bring as many moments as possible to Life.

As the Davids shared questions and reflections with friends and colleagues, some of whom became WineSpirit Advisory Board members, what dawned was growing delight that each time they conversed, they gleaned more insight into wine's extensive role in celebrating life and relationships. Wine metaphors blend knowledge with passion, inspiring people to make moments special, even holy; that is the domain of spirituality. Many teachings from widespread traditions can join hands in alignment and unity in raising a glass of wine to share in a toast.

What is WineSpirit's perspective on wine?

Wine is a distinctive agricultural product resulting from a partnership between people and nature. Its unique characteristics have drawn many people to change careers and life paths and become grape growers and wine producers.

Religious and cultural traditions use wine to *sanctify* life & through the Eucharist, a memorial of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Kiddush, the Jewish blessing over wine recited for the Sabbath, holidays, and special occasions, and through observances unique to many different ways and paths.

Medical studies, in fact, continue to reveal that moderate consumption of wine is beneficial to physical health. Research also shows that community and relationships benefit in terms of emotional and physical health.

WineSpirit focuses on spiritual benefits associated with wine. With wine in hand, one "catches" a precious moment and a relationship, an act of "priming the spiritual pump".

To expand the domain of wine and spirituality, WineSpirit Institute was created as a 501 c-3 non-profit educational institute to bring together people of all backgrounds to explore and to share their stories of what brought them to the world of wine.

What kinds of programs does WineSpirit provide?

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

Through conversations at potluck gatherings and other contexts bringing people together WineSpirit addresses questions over a glass of wine and a nosh in a variety of areas:

What brings you to the world of wine?

How are passion and wine connected?

What sets wine apart from other spirited beverages?

Where can I find WineSpirit Programs?

Presently WineSpirit activity is focused in the Napa Valley and Northern California, but with your interest and participation through the website, plans are to develop WineSpirit programming in your homes, neighborhoods and places of work.

Other opportunities to explore questions connecting wine and spirituality include monthly potlucks, breakfasts, Sunday afternoon wine and cheese at times with wine elders/sages making a video, hosted at wineries and sites that are partners with WineSpirit.

What Areas of conversation does WineSpirit include?

There are seven themes for conversation:

1. **Identity:** *What is in our nature that attracts us to wine and its lessons in matters of timing and balance?*
2. **Origin:** *What can we learn from the past of wine's significance in making life a blessing?*
3. **Discovering:** *Hearing the stories of others, what do we learn to appreciate about our own life?*
4. **Gleaning:** *What can we learn in Lessons from the Vineyard, the experiences and insights of people who grow grapes and craft wine?*
5. **Celebrating:** *How can we make time to turn more of life into blessing and to toast such moments and those with whom we share them?*
6. **Harvesting:** *How do we take what we learn and enrich each other's lives?*
7. **Savoring** (quiet internal self-reflection): *When do we find time to sit in quiet and rest with our thoughts and feelings?*

WineSpirit Conversations encourage people to explore different ways and work contexts through which to learn to better integrate all that they do into their life journeys.

How Does the Website Connect me to WineSpirit?

The website enables opportunities for people to participate from around the world and glean insights shared in face-to-face settings in a virtual way. One particular Internet-based presentation is the periodic "A Sip of WineSpirit" that goes out to participants. These "Sips", produced both by Executive Director David White, and, on occasion, by other members of WineSpirit, provide brief reflections connecting metaphors of wine to spirituality. "Sips" can also be accessed on the website. The Sips are the basis of the newly published Sippin' on Top of the World

Soon members will have access to audios and videos of programs held in different locations, as well as segments of videos of elders and sages filmed in the past. Insights and nuggets shared in different locales will be included in Forum and Blog formats allowing for broader participation and perspective. People can participate by registering [here](#) with their profile including a photo of themselves and a small bio.

The benefits of registering as a User (Website Member) on WineSpirit.org:

- WineSpirit Newsletter informing you of WineSpirit news and events
- Searching the database of members (public cannot see your information unless approved as a member)

- Connecting with other users and then being able to utilize the private message system to communicate with connections
- Use of gallery, with discretion since it's moderated, to upload your photos such as your business logo, anything wine related, or WineSpirit related
- Blogging ability for WineSpirit board members (and others by approval)

Which Elders and Sages Does WineSpirit Have on Video?

Video guests from 2001 - 2003 included:

- Brother Timothy, winemaker for Christian Brothers during Prohibition
- Al Brounstein of Diamond Creek
- Justin Meyer of Silver Oak
- Rene de Rosa
- Jan Shrem of Clos Pegase
- Jan Birnbaum of Catahoula Restaurant
- Margaret Duckhorn
- Jamie Davies of Schramsberg
- Alan Steen co-founder of Whitehall Lane
- Robert Mondavi joined by his wife Margrit

In addition we have from 2006 **Valeria Huneus** of Quintessa (addressing sustainability in the vineyard) and [WineSpirit Advisory Board](#)

[members](#) and participants in conversation at Silver Oak addressing what we have learned about wine and spirituality over the past five years. We also have filmed

Joanne Depui

, who was involved in the organization of the Paris Wine Tasting of 1976. Editing is being completed on videos of

Jack Cakebread

and

Mike Grgich

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How can I Obtain DVD's of People Already Filmed?

Three of the of the videos have been edited into DVD format for distribution to those interested members and for eventual screening for public television. They are **Jamie Davies** of Schramsberg.

Robert Mondavi

joined by

Margrit

, and

Al Brounstein

of Diamond Creek. We will continue to edit the others, as well, thanks to a grant from the *Gasser Foundation* in Napa, Ca.

How Do I Become a WineSpirit Member?

Financial memberships are:

- Under \$100: Supporter
- \$100: Participating Member
- \$250: Supporting Member
- \$500: Sustaining Member
- \$1000: Foundation Member

We welcome tax-deductible contributions in any amount. You are welcome to any event, including WineSpirit Advisory Board meetings. Membership at different levels is thanked with gifts of videos, opportunities for free or reduced cost attendance at activities and/or a presentation of a WineSpirit program at a location of the donor's choice.

WineSpirit depends on generous donations to move forward with its activities and programs. Thank you for your contribution.

What Are The Benefits Of Joining WineSpirit?

To participate in WineSpirit is to become part of a diverse physical and virtual community with all the benefits associated with meeting new people and developing new relationships.

The environment is conducive to developing friendships and stronger business associations, allowing for networking of the highest order.

For those who enjoy wine and would like to become more connected to those who produce it, WineSpirit provides framework and foundation bridging the worlds of producers and consumers.

WineSpirit enables people of diverse backgrounds to better understand and appreciate varieties of traditions and ways of associating both with wine and with spirituality.

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