



PRESS INFORMATION

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Brooke Balderson and Noah Wright

Biographies

Brooke Balderson and Noah Wright bring a wealth of training, enthusiasm and expertise to the Oz Winery.

Brooke, co-owner of the Oz Winery, is a Wamego native and the fourth generation of the Balderson family to operate a hometown business. She is also an award-winning supporting actress and loves to travel.

A graduate of Kansas State University, Brooke is also a certified pastry chef from Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She graduated from the Le Cordon Bleu in Patisserie & Baking as valedictorian. After graduation, Brooke returned to Wamego and took over co-ownership of the Oz Winery, but she still enjoys creating pastries and delicious treats for those who book private tasting parties at the winery.

“I love the culture of wines and the pleasure derived from enjoying a good meal with good friends shared over a glass of wine,” Brooke says.

Noah Wright, who serves as head winemaker at the Oz Winery, was born and raised in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and is also a Kansas State University graduate. Noah is a certified wine professional from the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley, California.

“I have always enjoyed wines, visiting vineyards and learning all I could about different types of wines. There are so many interesting aspects of the wine making process and I love to share what I’ve learned with our customers,” Noah says.





The Oz Winery

History

The Oz Winery has been located on the Road to Oz, also known as KS 99 and Lincoln Avenue, in Wamego since July 4, 2007. The winery has established itself as the home of award-winning wines and a must-taste destination on the Road to Oz. Its table wines salute the story of Dorothy, a young Kansas girl who ventured to Oz only to discover “there’s no place like home.”

Quick Facts

- Located at 417 Lincoln Ave., Wamego, Kansas
- Founded as a farm winery in 2007
- Majority of grapes used in Oz Winery wines are cultivated under the Kansas sun
- A proud member of the Kansas Grape Growers & Winemakers Association
- Offers a wide variety of wine and party accessories
- Can be reserved for private tasting parties



The Oz Winery

Just the Facts

The Oz Winery bottles approximately 5,000 gallons of wine a year. A complete list of wines made at the winery is available on the winery's website, www.OZWineryKansas.com.

The Oz Winery is a member of the Kansas Grape Growers & Winemakers Association, and offers a variety of Kansas grape varietals, which include:

- Seyval
- Vignoles
- De Chaunac (offered by the bottle, 100% Kansas grapes)
- Norton (offered by the bottle, 100% Kansas grapes)
- Fredonia (offered by the bottle, 100% Kansas grapes)

Special edition and limited edition wines include:

A limited edition wine is offered during OZtoberfest and is an annual festival series.

- Surrender, a short-run wine, is a sherry-like dessert wine.
- Lion's Courage is a new port-like dessert wine and is available in small quantities.

Awards and Recognitions for Oz Winery wines:

The Oz Winery's Emerald City Lights wine was the featured wine for the third course of the KGGWA's Pioneer Banquet in 2009.

The Oz Winery has received several People's Choice Awards at the Kansas State Fair, including:

- Witch in a Ditch – 2007
- Witch Gone Good – 2007
- Yellow Brick Road – 2008

Wine making in Kansas

History

The Oz Winery is part of a long history of wine making in Kansas. It is one of 15 Kansas wineries which combine to produce 50,000 gallons of wine and host thousands of visitors each year.

- Northeast Kansas has often been referred to as the Napa Valley of Kansas. This comparison is the result of Kansas vintners receiving more than 300 international awards for their wines in recent years. (Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association and Kansas Department of Commerce website)
- The Kansas climate provides a nice long growing season in terms of degree sun days, which are days when the temperature is high enough to produce quality grapes and the sun is shining. (Norm Jennings, Chair of the Grape and Wine Industry Advisory Council)
- Kansas also has a high average wind speed, which in combination with the heat helps reduce moisture and bug problems within the grape canopy. This helps lower levels of chemical applications to control or eliminate molds, rots, fungus and small pests, which in turn provides an opportunity for increased quality. (Norm Jennings, Chair of the Grape and Wine Industry Advisory Council)
- Prior to Prohibition, Kansas was one of the top five grape producing states in the nation. (Kansas Viticulture and Farm Winery Association)
- In 1880, the year Kansas went dry; the state census reported a production of 226,000 gallons of wine. (Thomas Pinney, A History of Wine in America: From the Beginnings to Prohibition)
- In 1985, Kansas passed the Farm Winery Act establishing guidelines for and allowing wineries in the state. (Kansas Department of Commerce website)
- Using locally grown grapes, berries and other fruits, Kansas winemakers produce a wide variety of delicious favorites, including some you won't find anywhere else. (Kansas Department of Commerce website)



Kansas Shipping Regulations

- Kansas farm wineries can ship directly to out-of-state customers who have purchased wine at the winery.
- Kansas farm wineries can sell to out-of-state customers through the mail or online and ship to liquor stores in the customer's state. Some states allow for direct shipping to customers through mail or internet orders.
- Kansas consumers can have out-of-state wine shipped to them through Kansas liquor stores, if those wines are not available in the stores.



Other things to do in Wamego

The Oz Winery is located in Wamego on the official Road to Oz, which is also KS 99. It is known as Lincoln Avenue as it passes through the main business district of Wamego.

Just 15 minutes east of Manhattan, 30 minutes west of Topeka and less than 100 miles west of Kansas City, Wamego offers many other attractions and things to do in this community of 4,500 nestled along the fertile banks of the Kansas River.

- Wamego has over 90 rooms at motels and bed breakfasts.
- There are more than 16 dining options.
- The City Park is often listed among the top picnic spots in the state.
- There is access for canoeing or kayaking on the Kansas River on the south side of town.
- The Columbian Theatre features many oversized paintings from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The White City at the fair's Columbian Exposition was the inspiration for what became the Emerald City in L. Frank Baum's Wonderful Wizard of Oz.
- The Columbian Theatre, originally built by J.C. Rogers, another visitor to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and the man who brought the artifacts from the fair back to Wamego, is also the venue for live theater productions and the Swogger Gallery, which features rotating art and history exhibits.
- The Oz Museum is home to one of the largest privately owned collections of Oz memorabilia in the country. The gift shop also offers a wide selection of gifts and collectibles.
- Wamego is a vital and friendly community which is known for its festivals.
 - The July 4 celebration is considered one of the largest in the state and features a carnival, parade and one of the largest fireworks displays.
 - The Annual Tulip Festival is the third weekend in April and features artisans and craftspeople from all over the country set against the backdrop of 10's of thousands of tulips.
 - Every October, the OZtoberfest brings several of the original munchkins from the 1939 movie, The Wizard of Oz, to town, as well as many visitors and Oz fans.
- Other opportunities for sightseeing or exploring the area's rich history include the Historical Village in the City Park, birthplace of Walter P. Chrysler and the Oregon Trail, which passed just north of Wamego. Wamego has over 90 rooms at motels and bed breakfasts.



Oz Winery a Fun Stop for Serious, Not-so-Serious Wine Enthusiasts

Press Release - 3/01/09

WAMEGO, Kan. -- When Brooke Balderson and Noah Wright started working together at the Oz Winery on the main street of Wamego they had a mission. The two professionally trained culinary artists wanted to create a winery where everyone could enjoy themselves.

“We wanted a winery where people, whether they considered themselves wine connoisseurs or wine curious, could come, try some of our wines and have fun,” Balderson said.

Balderson, a Wamego native, is a certified pastry chef from the Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute. Wright is a certified wine professional from the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley. Both are graduates of Kansas State University and returned to Wamego in 2007.

“We have fun working together and we hope that enjoyment touches everyone who visits the Oz Winery,” Wright said.

The winery, located on KS 99, which has been officially designated the “Road to Oz,” opened its doors in 2007 and immediately began receiving awards for its wines. Oz Winery wines have been winners of the Kansas State Fair People’s Choice Awards for several years. The winery also specializes in limited edition wines, such as the OZtoberFest annual series and Surrender, a sherry-like dessert wine.

Adding to the fun at the Oz Winery are the clever names of the wines and unique bottle labels. A new wine from the winery, a port-like dessert wine, is called The Lion’s Courage. Other wines include Witch in a Ditch, Run Toto Run, Witch Gone Good and Emerald City Lights, which was a featured wine for the third course of the Kansas Grape Growers & Winemakers Association Pioneer Banquet in 2009.

“We’re serious about creating our wonderful wines, but we like to have fun with the packaging and the sharing of them,” Wright said. “We hope to take some of the mystery and pretense out of wines, by making them more accessible to a broader market.”

Most of Oz Winery’s wines are available for tasting at the winery.

“We love to share our wines, as well as the fun, with our customers. And this is a place where questions, from how we make our wines to what kind of wine accompanies their favorite meals, are welcome. There are no stupid questions here,” Balderson said.

But what is at the winery is a wide variety of wine, bar and party accessories, as well as special gifts for the special people in your life. Balderson also uses her culinary training and talent to prepare special treats for private tasting parties that can be booked at the winery.

The Oz Winery is located at 417 Lincoln Avenue, Wamego, Kansas. It is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. The winery can be reached at (785) 456-7417 and www.OzWineryKansas.com.

2 Oz Winery Photos

Available File Types



Oz Winery
Wamego, Kansas
 All work? Not always... Eric Stevenson, assistant winemaker at Oz Winery, is a perpetual motion machine as he preps bottles of the winery's hand-crafted wines for corking. The Oz Winery, in historic downtown Wamego, Kansas, offers free tastings and a wide variety of wine and party accessories.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



Oz Winery
Wamego, Kansas
 O.E.O....A new batch of Oz Winery's O.E.O. wine is carefully checked by Noah Wright, head winemaker, before making it to the shelves in the Wamego, Kansas, store.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



Oz Winery
Wamego, Kansas
 It's all good...All of Oz Winery wines are hand-crafted and hand boxed. Noah Wright, head winemaker enjoys the entire wine making process, but knows once the wine is in the bottle, it's one step closer to someone enjoying it. The Oz Winery is located at 417 Lincoln Ave., Wamego, Kansas. Let us box some up for you.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.

Oz Winery Photos

Available File Types



Oz Winery
 Cork it! All of the wines at Oz Winery, in Wamego, Kansas, are hand-crafted to maintain the winery's reputation for quality. Eric Stevenson, assistant winemaker, operates the corkscrew press.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



Oz Winery
 Hi Ho, Hi Ho...Oz Winery's popular dark, dry red wine, O.E.O., lines up in the Bottling Room. The Oz Winery is located in historic downtown Wamego, Kansas, at 417 Lincoln Ave.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



Oz Winery
 Are you a good witch or a bad witch? Whichever... Oz Winery's award-winning wine, Witch Gone Good, received the Kansas State Fair's People's Choice Award in 2007. This top-selling sweet white wine with hints of citrus, made from Kansas grapes, is available at the Oz Winery, 417 Lincoln Ave., Wamego, Kansas.

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.

Oz Winery Photos

Available File Types



OzWinery-woman-browsing.jpg

More than wine... A visitor explores the Oz Winery's selection of hand-blown, green wine glasses from Mexico, and festive wine-themed dessert plates. The Oz Winery, in historic downtown Wamego, Kansas, offers shoppers more than just a fun winery experience – they also carry a wide variety of wine and party accessories that help make a social gathering something to write home about.



OzWinery-man-browsing.jpg

Take some home... A visitor explores the Oz Winery's selection of award-winning and hand-crafted wines, which are available by the bottle or the case. The Oz Winery, located in historic downtown Wamego, Kansas, also offers free tastings and a wide variety of wine and party accessories.



2 Oz Winery Wine Bottle Photos

Available File Types



OzWinery-100percentKansasWine.jpg OzWinery-100percentKansasWine.psd

- **Norton** - A dark, full-bodied red wine with notes of wildflower and cherry
- **Fredonia** - A well-balanced, semi-sweet red wine
- **De Chaunac** - A light, crisp and smoky red wine

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



OzWinery-OEO.jpg OzWinery-OEO.psd

- **O.E.O.** - A dark, dry red wine with hints of vanilla

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



OzWinery-Pop-ArtWines.jpg OzWinery-Pop-ArtWines.psd

- **Witch Gone Good** - A sweet, white wine with hints of citrus
- **Yellow Brick Road** - A soft and refreshing, semi-sweet white wine
- **Witch in a Ditch** - A fruity, semi-sweet red wine
- **Run Toto Run!** - An expressive, semi-dry red wine

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.

Oz Winery Wine Bottle Photos

Available File Types



OzWinery-TheLionsCourage.jpg
OzWinery-TheLionsCourage.psd

- **The Lion's Courage** - A port-like, dessert wine sold in 375 mL limited edition bottles

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



OzWinery-WineBottleTrio.jpg
OzWinery-WineBottleTrio.psd

- **Witch Gone Good** - A sweet, white wine with hints of citrus
- **Witch in a Ditch** - A fruity, semi-sweet red wine
- **Auntie Em's Prairie Rose** - A semi-sweet blush wine

Photo: Imagemakers Inc.



2 Oz Winery Logo

Available colors and file types



CMYK

- OZWinery-cmyk6000.tif
- OZWinery-cmyk.eps



RGB

- OzWinery-rgb1000.jpg
- OzWinery-rgb6000.tif
- OzWinery-rgb.eps



One Color

- OZWinery-onecolorlogo.eps
- OZWinery-onecolorlogo-bitmap.tif

