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How's this for a recipe for creating a winemaker: begin at **Burning Man**, the festival and experiment in temporary community held annually in the Nevada Desert. Next, quit gainful employment and proceed to travel around the world. Return to Oregon and learn to make wine. Repeat trip to Burning Man annually, or as needed.

Does that seem like a recipe which will develop a winemaker who makes memorable, world class wines? In the case of Zanzibar Cellar's winemaker and mastermind **Ziad Keirouz**, it's a proven path to winemaking success.

Ziad Keirouz, Zanzibar winemaker and co-owner, moved to Portland at age 16 from his native Lebanon. He received undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering from the University of Portland, working first at Freightliner and later at parent first company DaimlerChrysler. But the rigors of corporate life took a toll on him. After years spent as an engineer and project manager, "I hit the wall one day," he says. "I started working at 20 and burned out at 34. I was at the point where I said to myself - if I want to grow my hair long, if I want to wear jeans, I want to be able to do that."

Perhaps appropriately, the burned-out Keirouz traveled to his first Burning Man that year, an experience he describes as transformative. His next move? Not winemaking - not quite yet.



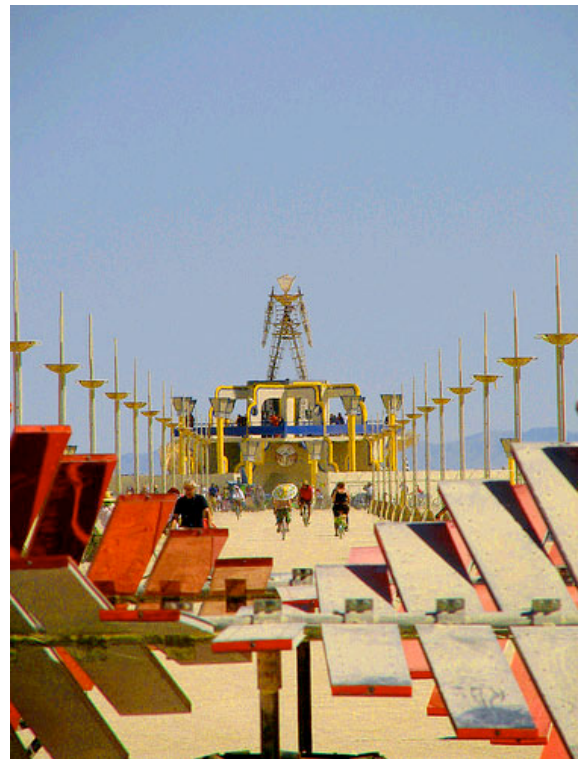
Ziad and Glen

First came an around-the-world tour with friend (and now Zanzibar Cellars business partner) Glen Boyd, a co-founder of the software analytics company WebTrends. Boyd, Keirouz and two other friends journeyed aboard a 142 foot yacht; the voyage included stops in Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, Chile and the Caribbean.

"It was a once in a lifetime journey - you discover a lot about yourself when you do something like that," says Keirouz. After he returned from the expedition, Keirouz promptly quit his job. Thus began the transition from engineer to winemaker, or as he prefers to phrase it, "from scientist to artist."

Sometimes a seemingly benign occurrence, in retrospect, is in fact a 'tipping point' that generates far reaching changes. The seeds of

Zanzibar Cellars wines are made at the Owen Roe facility in Newburg, Oregon. Ziad Keirouz first met David O'Reilly, winemaker at Owen Roe, during his 'research' phase, at a Portland wine tasting event. Keirouz peppering O'Reilly with questions including whether he'd ever trained formally as a winemaker. "David told me that he'd studied theology and philosophy, and that gave me a lot of confidence," says Keirouz. "I realized then that I didn't absolutely have to go through the UC Davis Viticulture and Enology program to be a good winemaker."



Tower at Burning Man Festival

After that first acquaintance, Keirouz pitched in at several years' worth of bottlings at Owen Roe, in the process getting to know O'Reilly and the Owen Roe crew. "Ziad asked me very humbly if he could help out, and we eventually became good friends," recalls O'Reilly. "I'm originally from Belfast (in Northern Ireland), and Ziad is from Lebanon. We have a lot in common - similar personalities arise out of living through national conflict." O'Reilly doesn't hesitate to add that he's made good use of Keirouz at Owen Roe. "We love to give him a hard time," he chuckles, "and he gives it right back to us."

The relationship with O'Reilly paid off later, when Keirouz was ready to start making wine himself. When O'Reilly asked Keirouz where he was going to make his wine, Keirouz mentioned that he'd been looking into using the Carlton Winemakers Studio. O'Reilly promptly offered the Owen Roe facilities, and a mutually beneficial relationship was born. "Zanzibar wines are wines I'm proud to have made at my winery," says O'Reilly.

Not surprisingly, Keirouz' personal transition had a distinctive effect on his winemaking philosophy. "I control everything from start to finish," he says. "When I was working at Freightliner, I was a project manager, but always part of a team. I never really knew how much impact I had

ZanZibar Cellars were sown during just such a moment on Boyd and Keirouz' world travels.

"One evening, we took the tender out and were watching the sunset," recalls Keirouz. "Dolphins were following in our wake. It was magical." At that point, the conversation turned toward the future. "Glen asked me what I wanted to do when I got back from the trip. I told him I didn't know and he said - well, why don't you make wine?" Boyd's seemingly casual remark was in fact a critical moment for Keirouz, a moment now memorialized in two ways: Keirouz followed his dream of becoming a winemaker, and that path led to the founding of ZanZibar Cellars. As for the name ZanZibar - the Billy Joel song "Zanzibar" happened to be playing during the conversation.

Although he was a lifelong wine enthusiast, Keirouz knew that the task of turning his engineering skills into winemaking prowess would require more than simply understanding and appreciating good wine. "I'd spent years in my job managing large scale projects, so that experience taught me to do a lot of research ahead of time," he says. Once he left his job, Keirouz spent almost a year reading everything about winemaking that he could get his hands on. Finally, he remembers, "I got to the point where I said to myself - I can read another book, or I can actually do it."

Borrowing from his project management experience, Keirouz proceeded deliberately and conservatively in the early stages, leasing just one acre of vineyard land in Washington's Columbia Valley in 2003. Still, the first harvest was not without adventure. "That first acre yielded 1.6 tons. A buddy of mine took his truck up there with a rented trailer to pick up the grapes. He ended up burning his transmission on the way back down because he was overloaded." Those experimental grapes eventually became 200 cases of Keirouz' first wine, the well received 2003 Sandra.

individually. I want my wines to reflect me and who I am." He oversees and participates in every aspect of the winemaking process from start to finish, even sorting his own grapes and doing his own punch downs.

His goal: to produce individualistic, distinctive wines reflective of Northwest climate and terroir; wines which are restrained and full of structure (he leaves the wine on the skins for up to 28 days) and that will age well over time. "A lot of people say my wines remind them of Super Tuscans, but I'm not trying to make something that imitates another type of wine. I want to make a wine that's unique and expressive of my abilities and reflective of what Washington has to offer." David O'Reilly of Owen Roe describes ZanZibar wines as "gorgeously complex. Ziad uses post-fermentation to pull out secondary flavors - he gets beyond overt fruit and finds layers of other flavors underneath."

One of Keirouz's most creative and innovative winemaking projects is the development of a nonvintage Sandra Solera. Traditionally a winemaking technique used to create sherries, ports and maderias, the solera process blends barrels from successive vintages of a particular wine to create a new product that combines characteristics of all of the vintages within.

"I'm blending two barrels from every vintage of the Sandra since I first made it. After we've blended and bottled those this year, I'll replenish the Solera with barrels of what I make in 2007."

According to Keirouz, he is the only winemaker in the Northwest to use this particular technique. Just 50 cases of the non-vintage Sandra Solera are released every year.



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