

2005 Old Vine Zinfandel

Buchignani/Garcia Vineyard
Dry Creek Valley

The grapes are from the Buchignani/Garcia Vineyard, ("Booken yannee"), in Dry Creek Valley, in Sonoma County, the premier appellation in the world for growing Zinfandel. The Buchignani family planted this vineyard starting 114 years ago and have been farming it ever since. These gnarled old vines produce sparse bunches of incredibly flavorful fruit. Old Zins ripen unevenly, challenging the talents of the grower and winemaker and adding character to the wine. We've been making Zin from this vineyard for almost 30 years.

Jojo Garcia, who's married to Suzie Buchignani, is the best dry farmer I know. This is very specialized farming that requires tireless effort and a great deal of experience to produce optimal fruit and long living vines.

2005 was an exceptional vintage for all of the Deerfield partner vineyards. Our vintages seem to be more consistent than many other wineries. It is probably because we are more patient when it comes to picking the fruit at the perfect degree of ripeness. While yields were down due to late spring cold weather, the summer and fall gave us ideal conditions with the pick about 2 weeks later than usual.

Hand picked, triple sorted and de-stemmed leaving 80% whole berries. Fermentation on whole berries retains the fruit essences that make the wine rich. Fermentation temperature was allowed to peak at 94°F to extract maximum color, longer tannins, and high glycerin levels, which gives the wine a viscous mouth feel while masking the high alcohol, like vermouth in a martini.

The nose is fruity with nuances of blackberries, ripe cherries, blueberries, chocolate, tobacco, licorice and oak. The oak is balanced toward American heavy toast, with its profile toward the front of the palate. A rich explosion of fruit expands in the middle of the palate. The high alcohol drives the flavor up without a hint of heat. There is a hint of sweetness, which helps establish the forward fruit and contributes to the balance. Everything about this wine is intense. The finish is exceptionally long and lingering.

Winemakers: Robert Rex, Michael Browne, Matthew Wilson

Harvested: October 2, 2005

Brix at Harvest: 27°. Estimated maximum Brix after soak 32°

Acid at Harvest: 5.6 g/L as Tartaric, 2 g/L added. pH 3.65

Yeast: Started on native yeast and later inoculated with L2226 yeast.

Aging: 30 months in 30% French Oak, 70% American Oak, 40% new

Fining: none. Filtration: Cross flow at bottling

SO2 at Bottling: 22 ppm free, SO2 at release 10 ppm

Bottled: 371 cases – March 15, 2008. Released: August 1, 2008

Alcohol: 16.9% (the bottle says 16.6%), Residual sugar: 0.10%

Awards & Reviews: 93pts *Wine Enthusiast*, Gold Mededal, Sonoma Harvest Fair

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