



2006 Zinfandel

Vintage Summary

2006 began with consistent rain and cool weather. The vines, tired from the heavy 2005 harvest, awakened in early May with unusual warm weather for late spring. May, June and July averaged a high of 78 degrees. August and September lingered in the 85-degree range, helping achieve bright, ripe fruit character without picking based on concerns of too much sugar and high alcohol.

Vineyard Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. In June, shoots were around 6 to 8 inches, and we removed any growth not intentionally left at pruning. To help intensify color, ripen tannins and maintain healthy vines, we increased sun exposure and air circulation by removing laterals and creating a tunnel through the middle of the canopy. In June, the crop was reduced down to 1 cluster per shoot, minimizing yields to help maintain acidity and balanced ripening. Zinfandel clusters tend to be large and have shoulders or wings. Prior to veraison, we removed these shoulders and wings to ensure we had even maturity throughout the vineyard. A late green drop took place to provide consistent ripening since Zinfandel's clusters can be large and diverse. The moderate, consistent temperatures allowed us to pick in mid October.

Winemaking Practices

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. Once at the winery, our crusher-destemmer removed all of the stems and lightly crushed the grapes. The must (crushed grapes) was then placed in a stainless steel tank. The grape juice was cold soaked for 48 hours to help intensify color and phenolics. UV-43 yeast, a strain known for its intense gamy and spicy and characteristics, fermented the wine to dryness over a twelve-day period. During fermentation, the Zinfandel was pumped over twice per day for 45 minutes. We aerated the wine to expose it to oxygen throughout the fermentation. After the wine finished fermentation we continued pump overs for another two weeks. The wine was aged in 100% Neutral French oak to allow the varieties fruity characters to come through.

Tasting Notes

Our 2006 Zinfandel is bright cherry red with a blood red rim. The nose has aromas of white pepper, plumb, raspberry and touch of a floral potpourri component. The palate is soft and balanced upon entry, yielding flavors of strawberry, cassis and licorice. The mid palate has good weight, balanced nicely by a finish that showcases ripe fruit and soft tannins.

Specifics

Barrel aging:	18 months in 225-L oak barrels, 100% neutral	
Blended:	7/13 2007	
Harvest dates:	10/19, 2006	Racking; every 6 months
Brix at Harvest:	24.8	Fining: none
Harvest method:	100% hand-harvested	Filtering: none
Fermentation:	15 days with UV-43	Bottled: April 19, 2008
Maceration:	21 to 24 days including fermentation	pH: 3.74
Total Acidity:	0.74 g/100ml	Alcohol: 13.8%
Pump overs:	2 times daily during fermentation	Barrels: Allier, Never
Yeasts:	UV-43	