



Hollywood Red

Cienega Valley

Extremely bold and fruit forward, this Zinfandel-based wine captures the best characteristics offered by several estate vineyards. The distinct blend of six red varietals has aromas of white pepper, blackberries and vanilla with intense ripe berry flavors. Pair with fillet mignon, pork tenderloin or hearty pasta dishes.

Technical Data

Appellation: Cienega Valley

Varietal content: 65% Zinfandel, 6% Negrette, 15% Syrah, 9% Cabernet Pfeffer, 4% Rose of Peru, 1% Alicante Bouchet

Yield: 1 ton per acre

Finished alcohol: 15%

pH: 3.6

Total acid: 0.6g/100 ml

Vineyards

To add depth to their Zinfandels, old-time California vintners commonly planted small quantities of other varieties in their Zinfandel blocks. These vines were arranged in the vineyard grid at regular intervals or sometimes used to replace diseased or damaged vines. Petite Sirah, Grenache, Carignane, Mourvedre and Alicante Bouchet were among the most popular choices.

Generations of winemakers harvested these "other" varieties with their Zinfandel and fermented them as one. Still used today, this method produces "field blended" wines that are loaded with complexity. Taking a different approach, Winemakers Pat and Al DeRose harvest, ferment and age each variety separately, then blend them with zinfandel and other estate-grown wines.

DeRose has about 10 acres of Zinfandel that were integrated with Alicante Bouchet and Rose of Peru vines in the late 1800s. The Alicante supports the blend with fat, middle-palate characteristics while the lightly colored, highly acidic Rose of Peru adds structure. Small amounts of Negrette, Syrah and Cabernet Pfeffer embellish the complexity and structure of this proprietary blend.

The dry-farmed vines grow on their own roots and yield about one ton per acre. They are planted in sandy-loam soils containing fist-size chunks of dolomite. This brilliant white mineral is mostly calcium, an essential element found in all great vineyards.

Cienega Valley is an elevated pocket in the Gabilan Mountains 1,100 feet above sea level. The region's warm, dry conditions are interrupted each day by cool air flowing from Monterey Bay, 25 miles west. The Gabilan Range is high enough to protect vines from direct contact with the cold coastal air, but low enough to allow breezes to mitigate the heat of summer afternoons. Rainfall averages 18 inches per year and fog is rare. This temperate climate is well suited to producing rich red wines.

Fermentation

Grape lots were destemmed separately leaving many whole berries intact. Musts were transferred to open-top stainless steel tanks and macrobins for three days of cold soaking. Temperatures were increased and fermentations began with native yeasts. Tanks were pumped over and bins were punched down three or four times daily during the 15- to 18-day process. Lots were pressed, allowed to undergo secondary fermentation, and then settled for about two weeks. Finally, they were blended and racked four times during 20 months of aging in French oak barrels.

