



Zinfandel

Cienega Valley

Our big, bold signature wine is slowly fermented with native yeasts to express the deep colors and intense raspberry and blackberry flavors produced by our century-old vines. Its rich, complex mouthfeel will leave you with ripe berry flavors over a long, smooth finish. Serve with bacon-wrapped filet mignon, Cajun pork chops, eggplant Parmesan or a dessert of dark chocolates.

Technical Data

Appellation: Cienega Valley

Varietal content: 100% Zinfandel

Yield: .8 tons per acre

Finished alcohol: 16.2%

pH: 3.52

Total acid: 6.1g/L

Vineyards

Cienega Valley is an elevated pocket in the Gabilan Mountains 1,100 feet above sea level. The region's warm, dry conditions are quite agreeable to the thin-skinned Zinfandel grapes, enabling sound crops to be picked late in the year without the threat of bunch rot. 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 15 inches per year while fog is rare. This temperate climate is well suited to producing rich red wines.



DeRose has 15 acres of Zinfandel vines originally planted on their own roots in the late 1890s. Dry farmed on steep hillsides in Cienega Valley, the head-trained vines produce highly pigmented grapes inscribed with a spicy mountain terroir.

Zinfandel grows in an assortment of soil types including a rocky mixture created by the San Andreas Fault and a fine sandy-loam containing high concentrations of calcium. All of these soils are quite fertile and have very good drainage. Tried-and-proven terraces help prevent erosion during heavy winter storms.

Winemaker Pat DeRose works year-round to achieve optimum vine balance, beginning with well-planned winter pruning and careful leaf removal later in the year. With adequate rainfall and extensive root systems, vines are able to obtain proper hydration and nutrition during the long growing season. They yield an average of three-quarter tons per acre.

Fermentation

Zinfandel clusters were destemmed leaving much of the fruit intact. The must was transferred to open-top stainless steel tanks where fermentations were started with native yeasts. Temperatures were kept under 88° F. for the 15 to 18 day process. Caps were managed with both pumpovers and punchdowns three or four times daily. Lots were pressed, allowed to undergo secondary fermentation, settled for about two weeks, blended, and finally aged in French oak barrels for 14 months.