

THE HERITAGE VINEYARD



The Heritage Vineyard is an unusual and unprecedented collection of rare and famous Zinfandel vine cuttings grown throughout California. The Heritage Vineyard stretches over one acre within the UC Davis Oakville Research Station in Napa Valley, California. During the first phase of the project in 1995, 63 selections were planted; during the second phase in 1999, an additional 27, so that the total number of selections now totals 90. The vines are grafted onto St. George rootstock in clay loam soil with a spacing of 9 feet x 8 feet. Each vine is head-trained and spur-pruned in the "goblet" shape as they would have been in the nineteenth century. These practices are not as typical today, since they insure a low (and high quality) yield.

ZAP began producing wine from this historical vineyard in 1997. The first Heritage Vineyard Zinfandel was harvested by ZAP winery producer Nils Venge of Saddleback Cellars and Mary Buckles Pisor of PlumpJack Winery in Oakville. The 1998 vintage by Robert Biale of Robert Biale Vineyards in Napa, the 1999 vintage was by Matthew Cline of Cline Cellars. The 2000 vintage is by Rod Berglund of Joseph Swan Vineyards, 2001 vintage is produced by Joel Peterson of Ravenswood, 2002 vintage by Ehren Jordan of Turley Wine Cellars, and vintage 2003 by Paul Draper of Ridge Vineyards.

THE 2003 HERITAGE VINEYARD ZINFANDEL

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

HARVEST DATA

PICKING DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2003

YIELD: 2.285 TONS

BRIX: 25 °

T.A.: 0.67 G/100ML

PH: 3.36

YEAST: UNINOCULATED

BOTTLED WINE ANALYSIS

BOTTLING DATE: JANUARY 18, 2005

T.A.: 0.64 G/100ML

PH: 3.58

ALCOHOL: 14.6%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.17 G/100ML (DRY)

The Heritage Vineyard zinfandel vines fully ripened following a blazing heat wave in 2003. On September 16th, the hand picked fruit was carefully sorted into half-ton bins and transported up the narrow and twisty roads leading to Ridge Vineyards high in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The ninety selections of zinfandel grown in this vineyard clearly made their diversity known when looking at the clusters in the picking bins. The morphological differences of cluster size, shape, berry size, color, and flavors were quite special. The fully crushed fruit was sent to a three-ton stainless steel square tank and allowed to ferment with the naturally occurring yeast. There were no nutrient additions or inoculation for malolactic fermentation made. The juice was circulated over the floating cap twice a day, but as extraction began to appear, the duration and frequency were reduced. The free run was pulled on the seventh day of fermentation, skins pressed, and press wine tasted for quality of tannins then blended into its free run. The natural malolactic fermentation quickly completed within a month. The finished, yet unsettled, wine was racked to one-year old American oak barrels to begin aging. Racking off settled lees was done every quarter. The eight barrels of production was kept deep within the century old cellars of the Monte Bello Winery. Fourteen months total barrel age has allowed for full fruit expression, perfect oak integration, and softening of tannins. This lovely wine is deeply complex with mixed briary fruits, exotic spice, rich tannins, and very lively acidity (much like prior vintages.) This full-bodied wine showcases deliciously pure jam fruit with big rich tannins support. Drink now and over the next seven to ten years.

Tasting Notes: Deep garnet color, pungent high-toned blackberry fruit, clove and nutmeg barrel spice lift. Rich blackberry fruit entry onto the palate, plum-black cherry pitted fruits in the middle through finish. Boisterous acidity, dust-covered fruit, sweet toasty oak, big elegant chalky tannins carry the finish giving great length.