



Kicking off California Wine Month with Zin!

[September 2, 2014](#) [Wilfred Wong](#)



Though [Zinfandel](#) is often called the “California grape,” its origins are slightly further away. Where is origin of Zinfandel? In 2000, Carole Meredith, co-proprietor of Lagier-Meredith and American grape geneticist, published findings that suggested Croatia was the origin of this varietal. Before this, many in the industry believed Zinfandel was possibly a descendant of Primitivo, the Southern Italian grape. It’s true that Zinfandel and Primitivo are related, but they are both clones of Crljenak, a native variety of Croatia.

Zinfandel has become “California’s own.” Since the early 1970’s the state’s wineries have produced some of the world’s finest red wines

from our beloved Zinfandel. While the research continues, it is clear that California producers have made a stake in the Zinfandel sweepstakes. Whether it is called Primitivo or Crljenak Kaštelanski, California Zinfandel is the prize that is finding itself more often at the dinner table.

“The name Zinfandel was first used in 1832 and established a separate identity for the grape and one unique to America.” (Source: Zinfandel, Producers and Advocates, April 2002). It was not until the early 1970’s that Zinfandel emerged to become the superstar varietal that it is today. Ushered into the limelight by the 1968 Sutter Home Deaver Ranch, a flood of marquee players from the outstanding class of 1973 Chateau Montelena, Ridge Geyserville, Dry Creek Vineyard and others changed the varietal’s place in history forever. Zinfandel was now becoming one of the prizes on the runway.

I drink Zin all the time. My favorite match is pairing it with grilled pork chops. Pork tenderloin with a wine sauce reduction has been one another go to combination. But the ever popular grilled steak with fries works well too. Celebrate 10th Annual California Wine Month and pop the cork on the delicious [2012 Seghesio Sonoma County Zinfandel](#). The golden state, family and friends will be happy you did.