

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2019 GRIST VINEYARD ZINFANDEL DRY CREEK VALLEY

Vineyards

Originally settled by an Italian family in the late 1800s, Grist Vineyard is now owned by Sonoma County's Hambrecht family. This Dry Creek Valley property is on the northwestern slope of Bradford Mountain at an elevation of 1,000 feet. The volcanic, red soils — Boomer loam and Stonyford loam — are reminiscent of Tuscany's terra rosa. We source Zinfandel fruit from 30 of the 51 total acres, which were planted in 1974. Though there is some debate, the Zinfandel vines are thought to be from the "mother" blocks planted in 1900, the Hambrecht/Mead Atlas Peak clones.

Vintage

After record-breaking rainfall in late February, causing major flooding in the areas surrounding the Russian River, a relatively cool spring followed, delaying bud break into mid to late March. The delayed onset and cool temperatures would predict the beginning of harvest at a more typical date, compared to a few past vintages. The month of May brought more heavy rains. Thankfully, the cold temperatures and delayed start of bud break meant that bloom was later as well, and only a few vineyards had started to produce flowers, so damage to the crop was minimal. Summer temperatures were perfect and mild. By June, growers began to see that a big crop was forming. Come July, veraison was under way and growers had to drop lots of unevenly ripening clusters on several occasions. Despite the quantity of clusters per vine, flavor, concentration, and tannin levels were quite excellent. Canopy management was extremely important in that fruit thinning was necessary at multiple stages of vine development.

Winemaking

This Zinfandel was produced much like a Pinot Noir, using extremely gentle winemaking techniques to showcase the varietal and site characteristics. The grapes were harvested at the optimum sugar content of 23.6°Brix and then carefully hand sorted to capture the highest quality fruit. Grapes were transferred to an open-top fermenter and cold soaked for 5 days before inoculation with a yeast strain known to enhance spicy aromas and add overall complexity. The fermenting juice was punched down 2-3 times per day. After fermentation was complete, the wine was transferred to 40% new François Frères, Nevers Forest French oak barrels for 15 months.

Tasting Notes

Abounding with an array of black currants, fig jam, and ripe plums, this brambly Zinfandel is a delight to the senses. Cinnamon and sweet tobacco are woven together with an undelaying essence of white pepper and wood spice. Silky, well-balanced tannins support the mid-palate, while a refreshing lift of bright acidity completes the package.

Appellation

Dry Creek Valley

Vineyards

Grist Vineyard

Composition

100% Zinfandel

Fermentation & Aging

15 months in 40% new
French oak

Alcohol

14.5%

pH / T.A.

3.38 / 6.6 gm/L

Production

456 Cases

Bottling Date

January 28, 2021

Release Date

May 2023

Retail Price

\$55