



FROG'S LEAP

2015 ZINFANDEL NAPA VALLEY

A BRIEF HISTORY

Yes, we have noticed that the monster Zins of the '70s are still in fashion. And yes, just like fashion they command monster prices based on their "big" alcohol, "big" flavors, and "big" bottles.

Maybe it's that we found our early inspiration for Zinfandel from a different source — instead of reinventing Zinfandel, we looked to the past and the incredible Zins of the '40s and '50s. Those wines taught us the lessons that the old-timers knew: that field blends of Petite sirah, Carignane, and sometimes Napa gamay all picked at ripeness (not as raisins) added color, aromatics, and earthy complexity. In other words, the help of other varietals was needed to reveal the Zinfandel grape's true flavors. These principles form the foundation for our wine today.

ABOUT THE WINE

It is tempting to think of 2015 as a continuation of the drought years so highly reported in California. In fact, in Napa, there was ample rainfall to support full ripening with normal production. The real story of the vintage was a period of very warm weather in late August that rushed the Zinfandel harvest. The results, counter-intuitively, were not a bigger, brawnier Zin but rather a lighter, fresher style. Something very reminiscent of the late 1980's Frog's Leap Zins that are still drinking beautifully today.

A light garnet color announces bright, tart-cherry aromas with a hint of baking spices. The flavors are vibrant and perfectly balanced. At least in its early years, I will be reaching for this wine with traditional pasta dishes and simple grilled chicken. Time, I believe, will deepen and richen the wine, making for more intriguing possibilities. JW

APRIL 2022 TASTING ADDENDUM

As predicted, the 2015 has richened in flavor, especially in its fruit profile. The tart cherry of the new release has transitioned into fully mature fruit. You could call it ripe plum, but to my mind the fruit has combined with Zin's characteristic spiciness to give the wine a kind of exotic, Sephardic complexity—think dates, blood oranges and violets. The palate is fully developed and operating on all cylinders, with great length. I'd serve the wine, slightly chilled, with braised lamb or brisket, and it's the rare red wine that could even pair well with a little bit of spiciness in the food. RW



THE BLEND

79% Zinfandel
19% Petite sirah
2% Carignane
42% White Barn Vineyard, St. Helena
31% Molinari Vineyard, St. Helena
11% Leeds Vineyard, Rutherford
8% Gonzales Vineyard, St. Helena
4% Pesch Vineyard, Rutherford
2% Galleron Vineyard, Rutherford
2% Ricetti Vineyard, Mendocino

STATISTICS

harvested: August 16 to September 23
harvest chemistry: 24.2° brix, 7.7g/L total acidity, 3.40pH
final chemistry: 13.6% alcohol, 5.8g/L total acidity, 3.57 pH,
0.05% residual sugar
bottled March 10 2017
8,064 cases produced

WINEMAKERS

John Williams
Paula Moschetti
Rory Williams

VINEYARDIST

Frank Leeds

BALANCE, RESTRAINT AND DEEP RESPECT FOR THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE VINE