

2000 Gewurztraminer

Begin Vineyard
Sonoma Valley
Los Carneros

Deerfield Ranch Winery, in the heart of Sonoma Valley at Kenwood, is a 5,000-case winery, specializing in small lots of handmade wines from select vineyards of the California North Coast. Visitors sample our wines at the Family Wineries of Sonoma Valley Tasting Room on Sonoma Highway in Kenwood.

Our 100% Gewurztraminer (Ge-verts'-tra-meener) is from the Begin Vineyard in the Los Carneros Appellation of Sonoma. The vineyard is old (we're not sure how old), probably 50 years, and might have been ripped out long ago had the previous owner not abandoned it. The Begins have worked hard restoring the vineyard. The vines are again happily producing a very small crop of about one ton per acre.

The grapes were carefully hand picked since the bunches grow close to the trunk and wrap themselves around the canes. When ripe, the berries are very fragile and drop off the bunch if we're not careful. The reward in the picking is that these grapes are the tastiest of all wine grapes and a delight to eat. The fresh juice of Gewurztraminer is the best grape juice there is and we often bring some home to enjoy with breakfast.

The Wine: The grapes were whole-cluster pressed at very low pressure to preserve the fresh fruit character. After settling for a couple of days and racked (taken off the heavy lees) the almost clear juice was cold fermented on an Alsatian yeast called Aussemhausen. This yeast brings out the spicy quality in the taste. When the yeast reduced the natural sugar to 1.5%, we stopped fermentation by lowering the temperature to about 30 degrees, then filtered out the yeast to retain the remaining sugar. This slight natural sweetness retains all the wonderful spicy qualities and great fruit flavors that make Gewurztraminer so special.

Tasting Notes: The nose is full and rich with that unmistakable Gewurztraminer character, halfway between grapes and flowers. The taste is again a mixture of grapes and flowers with a middle spicy nuttiness that lingers in the finish. There are tastes of cloves and cinnamon, fresh honeydew melon and pears. Flowers are intertwined with all the other flavors. The finish is clean, very slightly sweet and lingering. Gewurztraminer is our favorite wine with spicy foods such as Ti and Sashwan. It's great with Sunday brunch on a Summer day. It's good with berries and cream. It's good by itself for an aperitif.

Harvest & Winemaking Data:

Winemaker:	Robert Rex & Michael Browne
Harvested:	By hand, September 20, 2000
Brix at Harvest:	24.8°
Acid at Harvest	.58g/100ml as Tartaric, corrected to .71g/100ml
pH	3.40
Pressing:	Whole cluster in a Sutter press
Assemhausen	
Fermentation:	Stainless for 45 days until stopped at 2°Brix
Max Fermentation Temp:	50°
Malo/Lactic Conversion:	None
Fining:	Bentonite for heat stability only
Filtered:	D.E. to remove yeast, sterile bottled
SO ₂ at Bottling:	14 ppm
Bottled:	261 cases – June 21, 2001
Residual Sugar:	1.5%
Alcohol:	13.0%
Released:	August, 2001
Awards & Reviews:	Not yet reviewed

