

2001 Syrah

Ladi's Vineyard Sonoma County

Deerfield Ranch Winery, in the heart of Sonoma Valley at Kenwood, specializes in small lots of handmade wines from select vineyards in the California North Coast region. Production totals 10,000 cases of a number of varieties, each a true expression of its appellation and terroir. Visit our Website at www.deerfieldranch.com, or call 707 833-5215

The Vineyard: Ladi's Vineyard lies in the foothills of the Rincon Valley, east of the Santa Rosa plain. The terroir of shallow, red, volcanic soil, slope and exposure, of this 17-acre vineyard is ideally suited to Syrah. Ladi Danielik has a unique talent for growing grapes. Each vine is individually pruned, trellised and trained to its specific needs. Five-time Gold Medalist for "Vineyard of the Year" at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair Wine competition, Ladi's Vineyard is the most highly decorated in the competition's history.

The Vintage: 2001 was superb, continuing the pattern of odd years surpassing the even years. Several natural cycles influence the quality of a vintage. There is the 2-year growth cycle of vines, the 7-year El Nino cycle, and a 25-year oceanic cycle only recently discovered. The interplay of these cycles influences long-term fluctuations in the life of the vine and quality of its fruit. 2001 was on the positive side of this interaction, producing a long and mild growing season, good balance in the vines and strong varietal flavors in the fruit. Picking took place during one of our common harvest-time heat waves causing a drop in acid, which was augmented during fermentation.

The Wine: We've continued to perfect our techniques since we started making Ladi's Syrah in 1997. We've added our own stylistic adjustments to traditional techniques used by Rhone Valley winemakers, where this varietal originated. The grapes were hand sorted and gently destemmed without being crushed. This preserved more than 60% whole berries compared to 25% in 2000 that contribute to the rich fruit flavors in the wine. The grapes were fermented in open-top tanks, hand-stirred and never pumped. Fermentation temperature peaked at a warm 97 F to extract maximum color, structure and glycerin, which improves mouth feel and viscosity. 16 months of aging in 80% French, 20% American oak barrels, was six months longer than the 2000 vintage.

Tasting Notes: The fine-tuning of our techniques and continued progress on the learning curve of winemaker and grower are evident in this bottle. We are very proud of the results. The color is a deep, brilliant red with hints of blue around the edges. Glycerin ribbons of pleasing color glide down the glass. The nose evokes images of ripe berries drizzled with chocolate and vanilla, soaking in a cedar bowl, with a gentle earthiness reminiscent of a cool evening in the forest. The taste follows these cues, layering on additional notes of earth, leather, maple and dried roses. The overall marriage of tastes lingers in every corner of the mouth well after swallowing. There is harmony and balance. Our 2001 Syrah is even fuller and more complex than the 2000 vintage that was rated 94 points. Our 2001 Ladi Syrah will bring out the best in red meats, game and wild mushrooms.

Harvest & Winemaking Data:

Winemakers:	Robert Rex & Michael Browne
Harvested:	By hand, October 1, 2001
Brix at Harvest:	26.0 ; Acid: 4.5g/L, adjusted
pH at harvest:	4.08, adjusted
Yeast:	Syrah (French origin)
Barrel aging:	16 months in 80% French, 20% American 40% new oak.
Max. Fermentation Temp:	97 F
Malo/Lactic Conversion:	100%
Fining:	none; filtration: screen only at bottling.
SO ₂ at Bottling:	22 ppm
Bottled:	March 19, 2003
Cases bottled:	530
Alcohol:	14.4%
Released:	September 15, 2003
Awards & Reviews:	91 points by <i>The Wine Enthusiast</i> magazine

