

Old Vine 2001 Zinfandel Buchignani Vineyard Dry Creek Valley

Vineyard and Vintage: Dry Creek Valley in Sonoma County is the premier appellation in the world for Zinfandel. The Buchignani family pioneered grape farming in the Dry Creek Valley, planting vineyards before the turn of the 20th century. The vines from which we make this wine are between 70 and 100 years old. These dry-farmed, gnarled old vines produce sparse bunches of incredibly flavorful fruit. Unlike most other varietals, old Zins ripen unevenly, challenging the talents of the grower and winemaker and adding character to the wine. The 2001 was the best vintage since 1997.

The Wine: Hand picked and sorted, the grapes were destemmed leaving 40% whole berries. During fermentation the whole berries retain the fruit essences that mask the high alcohol, like vermouth in a martini. Fermented in open-top tanks the temperature was allowed to peak at 94°F to extract maximum color, tannin and glycerin, which helps create mouth feel and substantial legs. The 21 day fermentation softened and integrated the tannins. The wine was aged in French and American oak barrels for 20 months, topped every 2 week and racked 4 times.

Tasting Notes: This is our biggest Zinfandel yet from this vineyard. The color is a brilliant, deep garnet. The nose is fruity with nuances of blackberries, ripe cherries, blueberries, chocolate, tobacco, licorice and oak. The oak is balanced toward American heavy toast. The berry flavors are beautifully integrated with the oak and tannins, resulting in a rich explosion of fruit in the middle of the palate. The high alcohol drives the flavor without being hot. Everything about this wine is intense yet completely balanced. The finish is exceptionally long and lingering.

Harvest & Winemaking Data:

Winemakers:	Robert Rex, Michael Browne
Harvested:	By hand, September 2, 2001
Brix at Harvest:	27.4°
Acid at Harvest:	5.6 g/L as Tartaric
pH:	3.62
Yeast:	L2226
Fermentation:	20 days open-top fermenters
Max. Fermentation Temp:	94°F
Malo/Lactic Conversion:	100% in barrel
Aging:	20 months in 40% French Oak, 60% American Oak, 40% new
Fining:	none
Filtration:	Screened at bottling
SO ₂ at Bottling:	18 ppm free
Bottled:	365 cases – May 13, 2003
Alcohol:	16.7%
Residual sugar:	0.08%
Released:	October 1, 2003
Awards & Reviews:	Not yet submitted. Previous vintage awarded one gold and two silver medals and rated 91 points by Wine Enthusiast.

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