

ZINFANDEL 2004

INTRODUCED TO THE VINEYARD FROM CALIFORNIA IN 1972, ZINFANDEL IS A PARTICULARLY DEMANDING VARIETY BOTH IN THE VINEYARD AND THE WINERY. CAPE MENTELLE'S ZINFANDEL COMMANDS A 'CULT' FOLLOWING FOR ITS BIG, RICH FULL-BODIED STYLE.

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| APPEARANCE | Garnet. |
| NOSE | The sweet, spicy aromas evoke cardamon, vanilla beans and candied fruit. |
| PALATE | Flavours reminiscent of summer pudding greet the palate, developing into the richer fig and Christmas cake characteristics typical of Cape Mentelle Zinfandel. The palate is full and robust with a firm core of chalky tannins perfectly balancing the density of the wine. This zin is ready to drink or cellar for up to six years. |
| VINTAGE AND VINEYARD | <p>A cold calm winter was followed by a mild spring lacking the extremes occasionally endured in the south west. The growing season was dry from mid-November through to mid-April. Judicious irrigation maintained vine health allowing a long, slow ripening season with most varieties harvested up to seven days later than usual. The rains held off throughout March and April to allow a smooth, problem free harvest, completing a fantastic vintage.</p> <p>Grapes are primarily sourced from the Estate Vineyard, planted in 1972, as well as the McHenry Vineyard, planted in 1994 and our Foxcliffe Vineyard, planted in 1999. All sites share similar soil types, growing on deep gravel laterite soils derived from decomposed ironstone over clay sub soils. The Estate vines are dry farmed.</p> |
| WINEMAKING TECHNIQUE | <p>All the zinfandel was handpicked between 14 and 19 March. Sugar levels were relatively high, ranging from 25.5 to 30 brix.</p> <p>After crushing the must is allowed to soak for several days prior to fermentation to soften up the raisins before being inoculated with a vigorous yeast strain. The wine steadily ferments to dryness in barrel by springtime and naturally completes malolactic fermentation. We use 50% new oak barrels, primarily French, for a total of 20 months.</p> |
| CLOSURE | Screwcap |

ZINFANDEL 2004- Technical Notes

TASTING NOTES

The sweet, spicy aromas evoke cardamon, vanilla beans and candied fruit. Flavours reminiscent of summer pudding greet the palate, developing into the richer fig and Christmas cake characteristics typical of Cape Mentelle Zinfandel. The palate is full and robust with a firm core of chalky tannins perfectly balancing the density of the wine. This zin is ready to drink or cellar for up to six years.

VINEYARD

Grapes are sourced from three Margaret River vineyards, primarily the Estate Vineyard planted in 1972, along with the McHenry Vineyard, planted in 1994 and our Foxcliffe Vineyard, located 10 kilometres south of Margaret River, planted in 1999. The planting material, from California, was brought into Western Australia in 1963 through the state agricultural department. All sites share similar soil types to the Estate Vineyard which grows on deep gravel laterite soils derived from decomposed ironstone over clay sub soils. Vine spacing is 2200 vines/hectare and is spur pruned on a low cordon. The Estate vines are dry farmed and have reached a venerable age maintaining a lovely balance between canopy density and fruitfulness. The younger Foxcliffe vines require more canopy management and crop thinning to achieve a similar balance.

THE SEASON

A cold but calm winter was followed by a pleasantly mild spring lacking the extremes occasionally endured in the south west. The growing season was dry from mid-November through to mid-April with only 80mm of rain falling during this period. The lack of rain was the most significant characteristic of the vintage and when combined with the mild temperatures it augured well for the grapes' development. Irrigation was a saviour this year and its judicious use allowed the vines to maintain sufficient health to ripen the fruit. Ripening was slow with most varieties harvested up to seven days later than normal. The rains held off throughout March and April to allow a smooth, problem free harvest.

HARVEST

All the zinfandel was handpicked between 14 and 19 March. Sugar levels were relatively high, ranging from 25.5 to 30 brix.

VINIFICATION

Due to zinfandel's tendency to ripen at a variable rate, all of the grapes are hand picked. After crushing and destemming the must is allowed to soak for several days prior to fermentation to soften up the raisins to attain the correct sugar level. The must is then inoculated with a vigorous yeast strain, pumped over gently once a day before pressing off after seven days. The wine steadily ferments to dryness in barrel by spring time and also naturally completes malolactic fermentation after which it is racked and sulphured. We use 25% new French and 25% new American oak barrels for a total of 20 months before filtration and bottling took place in December 2005.

Analysis: 16% alcohol, 6.7 g/L acidity, pH 3.57

Blend: 100% zinfandel

Closure: Screwcap