

2003 Dashe Cellars Todd Brothers Vineyard Zinfandel Alexander Valley

HISTORY

On an extremely steep slope of red, rocky volcanic earth, much of the Todd Brothers Ranch vineyard is made up of row after row of thick, gnarly, old-vine zinfandel. From our first sight of these vines—and the bright red soil in which the vines are planted—we knew that this vineyard would create a wine unlike any other.

The Todd Brothers vineyard, located in Geyserville in the northernmost stretch of Alexander Valley, makes some of our most structured, complex, layered zinfandels. The 2003 is no exception; it is a beautiful, structured, and complex zinfandel, with an intensity of color and flavor that makes it almost more like a cabernet sauvignon than a typical zinfandel. This is definitely a wine that will last for many years.

PRODUCTION

The vintage of 2003 was very moderate and balanced in temperatures, with cool evenings and warm days that slowly ripened the grapes. As was typical, we harvested the Todd Brothers Ranch grapes before any others, in the first week of September, trucking the grapes to the winery in ½ ton picking bins, and then sorting the grapes on a conveyor belt on the way to the crusher. We fermented the grapes using our traditional method of “submerged-cap” fermentation, using our custom-made stainless-steel grids to hold the grape skins below the surface of the fermenting juice. This method maximizes flavor, color, and complexity from the grapes without letting the wines get too tannic.

The temperature was allowed to get quite warm—above 90° F—to aid in the extraction of color and flavor. At dryness, the wine was gently pressed in a membrane press and pumped to traditional 60-gallon oak barrels.

The wine was aged for 14 months in French oak barrels, with about 20% of the wine aged in new French oak. Every three months we racked the wine out of barrel to clarify the wine and aid in its development. As the wine aged, it deepened in color and developed a complexity and firm structure that we believe will help the wine improve with up to eight years of bottle age.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Varietals: 98% Zinfandel, 2% Petite Syrah
Appellation: Alexander Valley
Sonoma County
Alcohol: 14.8% by vol.
Time in oak: 14 months
Oak: French; 20% new
Production: 311 cases, 750mL
Release date: February 1, 2006
Sugg. retail price: \$28.00 bottle, 750mL

Optimum time for consumption: 2006-2015

TASTING NOTES

Color: Purple-black
Aroma: Lavender, blackberry jam, chocolate, cassis, coffee, licorice.
Taste: Dark blackberry fruit, cassis, licorice, chocolate, thick and velvety texture.