

# *2006 Dashe Cellars*

## *Louvau Vineyard Old Vines Zinfandel*

### **HISTORY**

These 70-year-old vines are some of the best vines in the Sonoma wine country. They were discovered by John Louvau on his newly-bought property in 1989, hidden beneath a field of weeds and blackberry vines that had grown over the old grapevines. John nursed the vines back to health and now they produce some of the best grapes on the entire property. These are classic old-vine zinfandel: head-trained, dry-farmed, with thick gnarled trunks popping out of fist-sized rocks that make up the old riverbed. We love these old vines, because they make a classic Dry Creek Valley old-vine zinfandel, with the black raspberry, minerality, and deep aromatic dusty spice that make Dry Creek zinfandels so popular and sought-after.

### **PRODUCTION**

We picked these old vines in early September, after a rather long, coolish ripening period. As is typical with these old vines, the yields were quite low, about 2 tons per acre. We were also able to separately ferment a ton of Petite Syrah grapes from the younger vines adjacent to the old vines, which produced an incredibly flavorful, dense jet-black wine that we blended into the old vine wine. The resulting wine is dark, aromatic, and silky-textured wine, with substantial tannins that will soften with a bit of bottle age.

As always, we hand-sorted the grapes on a conveyor belt on the way to the crusher to eliminate any imperfect fruit. The crushed grapes were then fermented in half-ton picking bins using only the natural yeast population on the surface of the grapes (rather than commercial dried yeasts) to conduct the fermentation.

During fermentation we hand-punched the skins into the fermenting juice four times a day, using stainless-steel punch-down tools, to extract color and flavor components. 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 16 % 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: Dry Creek Valley  
Sonoma County  
Alcohol: 14.8% by vol.  
Time in oak: 14 months  
Oak: French; 16% new  
Production: 345 cases, 750mL  
Release date: November 14th, 2008  
Sugg. retail price: \$32.00 bottle, 750mL

Optimum time for consumption: 2007-2015

### **TASTING NOTES**

**Color:** Dark purple  
**Aroma:** Black raspberry, cassis, black cherry, lavender, clove, black pepper.  
**Taste:** Complex blend of black raspberry and cherry fruit, lavender, anise, clove spice, velvety texture, very full-bodied with round chalky tannins, long sweet finish of black raspberry fruit and spice.