

2007 Dashe Cellars

Louvau Vineyards Old Vines Zinfandel

Dry Creek Valley

HISTORY

We can never get enough of these remarkable old vine zinfandel grapes from the property of John Louvau in Dry Creek Valley. These old, gnarled, thick vines grow straight out of the rocky soil of the ancient riverbed on the “bench” of upper Dry Creek Valley, and they produce tiny quantities of jet-black, concentrated grapes. It’s a great pleasure to see vines such as these survive for over eighty years, and it’s an honor for us to have the ability to have made wine from these grapes for so many years. Old-vine zinfandel is one of the treasures of California, and we feel that this is one of the best old-vine vineyards in Sonoma County.

PRODUCTION

The vintage year of 2007 was simply one of the top ripening years in recent memory. The weather was ideal at harvest—warm enough to ripen the flavors but not so hot as to hurry the ripening process.

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 bit of Petite Syrah grapes from the younger vines adjacent to the old vines, which produced an incredibly flavorful, dense jet-black wine that we carefully blended into the old vine wine. The resulting wine is structured, very aromatic, and complex—a perfect wine to age or to go with substantial foods.

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 using only the natural yeast population on the surface of the grapes (rather than commercial dried yeasts) to conduct the fermentation. At dryness, the wine was gently pressed in a membrane press and pumped to traditional 60-gallon oak barrels.

The wine was aged for 12 months in French oak barrels, with about 12 % 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: 12 months
Oak: French; 12% new
Production: 422 cases, 750mL
Release date: November 7th, 2009
Sugg. retail price: \$32.00 bottle, 750mL
Optimum time for consumption: 2010-2018

TASTING NOTES

Color: Reddish black
Aroma: Extremely aromatic combination of red and black fruits: cassis, black raspberry, and cherry. Followed by spicy and floral notes of lavender, clove, and black pepper.
Taste: Very structured wine, with great texture and length. 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.