

# *2010 Dashe Cellars*

## *Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel*

### **HISTORY**

This is one of our most popular wines here at Dashe Cellars, and it's a classic example of a Dry Creek zinfandel: luscious and velvety in texture, showing lush black cherry fruit and firm acidity, and extremely elegant and layered. Thick, dark, and intense, the wine is also balanced and surprisingly low in alcohol for a zinfandel, at 13.7%. Simply put, this is a delicious wine.

Despite the challenges of the 2010 vintage for other grape growing regions, our Sonoma vineyards had a wonderful year in 2010. The cool and slow ripening made for perfectly balanced and expressive wines, and we are amazed at the depth of flavors and fine balance between fruit and acid that makes this wine so drinkable. Extremely dark in color, the wine is just a blockbuster of flavors: black cherry and raspberry, dark chocolate, coffee, mineral and earth, and clove and black pepper spice.

As always, we make this wine from a number of small, family-owned vineyards in the center and north of the Dry Creek Valley. Since Dry Creek Valley receives coastal fog and cooling influences in the evening and early morning, the grapes from this area show a bright acidity which balances the forward fruit from the vineyards, resulting in a long-lived and balanced wine.

### **PRODUCTION**

Luckily we were able to harvest almost all of our vineyards before any rain fell in late September, and we found all of the fruit to be of great quality. We used our special custom-made gridded tanks to ferment the wines. These tanks, outfitted with stainless-steel grids that can be raised or lowered on top of the crushed grapes, allow us to submerge the cap of grape skins beneath the surface of the fermenting wine. We extract color, body, and complexity from the grapes, using these grids, without extracting too much of the drying tannins found in the seeds. The result are intense and complex wines that feel velvety and round on the tongue rather than harsh or tannic.

All of the wines were fermented using only the natural yeast population on the grapes—our trademark and tradition at Dashe Cellars—and the resulting wines are intriguingly complex and luscious. During fermentation the temperature was allowed to rise to between 85 and 90° F, to aid in the extraction of color and flavor.

The wine was aged for 10 months in a older French oak barrels—including our 900 gallon French oak casks that allow us to gain the softness of oak aging without adding excessive oak flavors in the wine. All barrels were at least one year old and as old as seven years, so as to reduce the effect of oak on the fruit. In our blending trials, we added about 16% of petite sirah (for structure and aging potential) and 1% of carignane for softness and texture.

This wine is ideally paired with grilled meats, roast chicken, pasta dishes with robust sauces, lamb entrees, or simply as a delicious aperitif wine before dinner. We expect this wine to improve with age for eight or more years of bottle age.

### **PRODUCTION NOTES**

**Varietals:** 83 % Zinfandel, 16% Petite Sirah, and 1% Carignane  
**Appellation:** Dry Creek Valley  
Sonoma County  
**Alcohol:** 13.7 % by vol.  
**Time in oak:** 14 months  
**Oak:** 100% French; 0% new. 1800 gallons aged in large (900 gallon) French oak casks.  
**Production:** 2074 cases, 750mL  
299 cases, 375mL  
**Release date:** July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012  
**Sugg. retail price:** \$24.00 bottle, 750mL  
\$13.00 bottle, 375mL  
**Optimum time for consumption:** 2012-2020

### **TASTING NOTES**

**Color:** Black-purple, with reddish hues.  
**Aroma:** Black cherry, blackberry, chocolate, black pepper, cassis, mineral,  
**Taste:** Black raspberry and black cherry, mixed with chocolate, licorice, clove spice. Extremely balanced with good acidity, wonderful viscous velvety texture on the mid-palate, complex, long sweet finish of black cherry fruit, and peppery spice.