

2010 Dashe Cellars

Louvau Vineyard Old Vines Zinfandel

Dry Creek Valley

HISTORY

Each year, these 87-year-old gnarled vines produce a tiny amount of fruit that we make into a wine of great complexity and structure. The vines grow straight out of the rocky soil of the ancient riverbed on the “bench” of center east Dry Creek Valley. We make less than 200 cases each year of this intensely-flavored, luscious, velvet-textured wine. We consider this vineyard one of the best old-vine vineyards in Sonoma County.

PRODUCTION

2010 was a year with a wide range of unusual ripening conditions—first cool conditions, then extremely hot, then rain—but luckily these old “dry farmed” vines are some of the first grapes to be harvested, so they ripened evenly. Even better, the cool climate helped keep the acidity firm, so not only were the flavors intense, but the wine had a crispness and purity that we loved from the start. The flavors are very well integrated right now, but the wine will also age for a decade or more due to the supple tannins that balance the fruit.

The vintage of 2010 resulted in an even more tiny production than usual of these grapes—less than 1 ton per acre—so we were only able to make a meager 49 cases. 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 18 months in one-year or older French oak barrels, to keep the vibrancy of the fruit. 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 ten years of bottle age.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Varietals: 100% Zinfandel
Appellation: Dry Creek Valley
Sonoma County
Alcohol: 14.5% by vol.
Time in oak: 18 months
Oak: 100 % 1-year or older French oak
Production: 49 cases, 750mL
Release date: April 30, 2013
Sugg. retail price: \$35.00 bottle, 750mL
Optimum time for consumption: 2013-2021

TASTING NOTES

Color: Reddish purple
Aroma: Intense black raspberry, black cherry, black pepper, licorice, chocolate. The initial fruit is followed with aromas of cassis, cedar, and a deep earthy, almost truffle, aroma.
Taste: Black cherry and chocolate on entry. Great acidity makes for a bright, crisp, fruit-forward wine. Great texture and mouthfeel, showing a complexity and balance even in its youth. The depth of flavors, great acidity, and round tannins will make this quite a long-aging wine.