



## 2004 Zinfandel

### Vintage and Winemaking

In many ways, Zinfandel is a quintessential California wine. It was one of the early varieties to be planted in Northern California by immigrants from Europe. And while the grape may have had its origins in Europe under different names, California Zinfandel is unique and distinctive, a wine that has always been a favorite at our family table.

We are fortunate to get our grapes from some exceptional vineyards, including two mountain sites. One is the well-known Monte Rosso Vineyard, on a slope overlooking the Valley of the Moon. Some of the vines there are over 100 years old. For Cabernet Sauvignon, we prefer fruit from younger vines, but the Zinfandel from these old vines is rich and flavorful. Our other mountain site is on Atlas Peak. The fruit from that nearly 1,600 foot elevation has great color and depth. Additional layers of ripe fruit flavors come from two of our favorite vineyards at the warmer end of the Napa Valley floor, Fitzwilson and Stremel. We also included in the blend a small amount—7 percent—of Petite Sirah, a traditional partner to Zinfandel.

The summer of 2004 brought some heat spikes, but then the weather moderated and remained rain free until we began harvest on September 20. Harvest proceeded very slowly and selectively until we picked the last of the Atlas Peak grapes on October 27. This tempo allowed us to harvest the fruit at what we considered optimal ripeness in each area.

We aged the wine lots separately in a combination of French and American oak barrels, over 70 percent of them seasoned rather than new to maintain the dominance of the fruit. The wine aged in barrel for nine months.

Our Zinfandel is not distributed nationally, but is offered in our tasting room as a continuation of a family tradition.

### Tasting notes

Deep purple-red color. Aromas of blackberries, cherries, plums, baking spices and light smoke. In the mouth, the wine expands generously, with a solid core of ripe berry/cherry flavors underscored by some black pepper and spice. The texture is lush, almost velvety, and the wine balances its deep flavors with a backbone of firm acidity.

—Chuck Wagner

*Release date: August 2006*

*Retail price: \$36*