



CHATEAU MONTELENA
ESTABLISHED 1882

2019 Estate Zinfandel

Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton

INTRODUCTION

Long before they were confirmed to be two clones of the same grape variety, we noticed the synergies between Zinfandel and Primitivo in the bottle. Classic, heritage Zinfandel is a match for Calistoga: slightly rustic, occasionally briary, but rich and full-bodied when ripe. Primitivo, conversely, leans toward the red side of the flavor spectrum with ample acidity and incredible freshness. Both exhibit unique expressions of our Estate vineyard and therein lies the creative challenge: how to blend these disparate characteristics into a wine that is delicious, ageable and complex. Thankfully, it's due to this paradox that the profile has become so legendary and certainly rare in Napa Valley. Our Zinfandel is not like the others, and we're perfectly fine with that.

VINTAGE WEATHER

Late spring rains set the stage for big, juicy berries and ample soil moisture for our dry-farmed vines. Summer arrived in June with abundant warmth leading into July. The consistent heat accelerated ripening and persisted through August and into the beginning of September. This really was an ideal growing season for Zinfandel and Primitivo.

NOSE

Deep garnet in color, the wine opens with cranberry, raspberry and vanilla on the nose. While the aromas lean toward red fruit initially, they're bolstered by baking spices, cocoa and dried cherry.

PALATE

Medium in body, the palate brims with fresh strawberry and rhubarb, balanced by fine-grain tannins and plenty of breadth. The texture is seamless despite its youth, which bodes well for the future. A few minutes in the glass reveals additional depth as well as subtle notes of blackberry and spiced plum.

FINISH

The finish is slightly more candied and absent of any herbal character. Here, the tannins turn more silky or satin-like, extending and lingering with a hint of minerality.

Technical Information

HARVEST DATES

September 23 – October 6

ALCOHOL

14.3%

BLEND

100% Zinfandel/Primitivo

BARREL AGING

16 months in French and American oak, 16% new

BOTTLING DATE

April 2021

WINEMAKER

Matt Crafton