

Proprietor Selected
SPECIAL CUVÉE

Elizabeth Spencer

ZINFANDEL
MENDOCINO

Vintage 2005

10 Barrels

Produced & Bottled by Elizabeth Spencer Wines

APPELLATION: MENDOCINO
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% ZINFANDEL
WINEMAKER: SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: SPRING 2008

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Rich carmine in color. Effusive, sultry nose, proffering crushed black fruit, bramble, and a spice box of cracked pepper, cardamom, and nutmeg. The palate shows a good balance of rich, ripe fruit and acidity. Tannins flesh out the flavors of juicy plum and black cherry on the mid palate, and continue through the clean, taut finish.

WINEMAKING

After hand-harvesting, our 2005 Zinfandel was destemmed and sent as whole berries into a small open top fermentor. After a long cold soak which extracted color from the skins and released aromatics into the juice we began an intensive series of pumpovers and punch-downs, alternating treatments depending on how rapidly the fermentation progressed and the tannins -- 'grip' -- manifested itself in the new wine. We left the wine on the skins for a short post-fermentation maceration in order to increase complexity and texture, then pressed it down to barrels for a 16-month "elevage."

VINEYARDS

The vineyard which produced our 2005 Zinfandel is located in Redwood Valley, an idyllic winegrowing region north of Ukiah in Mendocino. The head trained vines are planted to rich red volcanic soils on a bench on the eastern slope of the valley, affording the vineyard judicious afternoon sun. The combination of warm days and cool nights in Redwood Valley provides for both the rich, ripe fruit flavors as well as the lively natural acidity in our Zinfandel, making it an ideal site for the cultivation of the variety.

VINTAGE

A wet spring and a cooler than average growing season allowed our 2005 Mendocino Zinfandel vines to develop their fruit at a more leisurely pace than usual. This provided for the retention of delicate and complex aromatics which might have otherwise been more difficult for the fruit to hold on to through the heat of a typical California summer. The grape's natural acidity also benefited from this long, cool growing season, and the resultant freshness and crisp structure in combination with fully developed flavors, tannins and aromas is a hallmark of the vintage.

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