

CHATEAU MONTELENA

Chateau Montelena's 19th century stone structure stands as a quality icon in Napa Valley, consistently producing some of the finest wines in California.



Zinfandel 2016

Napa Valley, California

ESTATE

Chateau Montelena's history is one of the deepest and most storied in the Napa Valley and California. Founded just north of Calistoga in 1882, it was one of the largest wineries in the state. Prohibition put an end to Montelena's winemaking, and the next major era began in 1968, when Jim Barrett purchased the estate. Jim fell in love with this exceptional property, blessed with a complex mix of soils, slopes and biodiversity of wildlife and fauna. He had a dream of creating wine at the level of the great First Growths of Bordeaux, and set about replanting the vineyard, outfitting the winery with modern equipment, and studying the processes necessary for farming and winemaking at the highest quality level.

WINE

Zinfandel is California's heritage grape, and as anyone who has tasted long-lived examples from the 1970s knows, it can produce wines of tremendous quality, both immediate pleasure and age-worthiness, and all in a rich and spicy berry profile. Like every wine they produce, Montelena looks first and foremost to take the tremendous fruit they work with and transmit it in a complex, balanced package.

VINEYARD

Soils: The decades old Zinfandel, planted in craggy volcanic soil, combined with 10-year-old vines in cobbly alluvial soil, produces a wine with complex character.

Farming: Chateau Montelena is committed to sustainable farming and produces wine in their solar powered winery.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 100% Zinfandel

Fermentation: Temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to allow the wines to ferment slowly and evenly.

Aging: French, Irish, and American oak barrels for 16 months, 20% of which are new.

Alcohol: 14.5% ABV

VINTAGE

Early budburst and a relatively mild spring laid the foundation for a successful Zinfandel crop in 2016. Predictable summer heat drove ripening without excessive stress on the old, dry farmed vineyards. The younger Primitivo plantings were harvested early as mild weather settled in during September. The resulting fruit provided a beautiful red berry contrast to the darker, brambly flavors from that of the old vines, which were picked later in the month.

TASTING NOTE

"On the nose, aromas of cinnamon and allspice quickly yield to ripe cherry and a torrent of red fruit along with a characteristic hint of tobacco. Dark and lush, the initial perception on the palate is of tart raspberry overwhelmed by blackberry jam, red licorice, and a supple earthiness that leans toward black pepper and anise. The finish, intriguing in its contrast to the palate, is driven primarily by the briar and spice character of the old vines: layered and dense, with just enough tannin to balance the mocha and barrel toast character from time in the cellar." -Winemaker, Matt Crafton