



Zinfandel, America's Heritage Grape, Has Many Stories to Tell

Zinfandel is an incredibly versatile grape at both ends of its life. In the ground Zinfandel vines thrive in a myriad of conditions and soil types. When well-made Zinfandel is consumed it works terrifically with a really wide array of flavors, making it among other things a great Thanksgiving Wine.

Pinot Noir gets a bit more press as a single vineyard and clone specific darling, but taste a few examples of Zinfandel from distinct places side by side and you'll see that the differences can be even more apparent. Along with some other journalists and winemakers I took part in a twitter chat and we sampled 4 different Zinfandels. When I posed the site diversity question Scott Harvey Wines assistant Winemaker Mollie readily agreed, "I completely agree that Zinfandel can show diversity and complexity. It is a great varietal to tell unique stories of place and vintage!"

Age is another factor that can have a great effect on Zinfandel Vines. Over time they produce less quantity, but what is grown has a tendency to have increased depth, intensity and individual character. Two of the wines sampled were from vineyards dating to the late 1800's and the differences in not only site, but age of those vines showed.

Bottom line when it's treated with appropriate care Zinfandel is a fascinating grape. It also happens that winemakers and wine lovers who pray at the altar of Zinfandel lovers are often willing to have more fun than those that focus most of their attention on other grapes. So yes Zinfandel is delicious, food friendly, distinct, and fun!

DeLoach Vineyards 2015 Riebli Valley Vineyards (\$50)

This vineyard has been farmed organically for more than 100 years. A small amount of Petite Sirah is planted within the vineyard as well. This wine shows the intensity and depth that would be expected from Zin vines planted in the late 1800's. This singular Zin leads with black cherry aromas and finishes with sour black fruit. A fierce vein of acid assures its mouthwatering nature. This is a fascinating wine that really changed in the glass over a short period of time.