



ZINFANDEL
JACKASS HILL • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
2020



2019 Vintage
98 points - Erin Brooks, Wine Advocate
95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous

2018 Vintage
97+ points - Erin Brooks, Wine Advocate
94 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous

WINEMAKING DETAILS

Fermentation: 100% neutral French Oak; 100% Malolactic; on the lees with daily battonage

Oak: 40% new French Oak,
60% neutral French Oak, 11 months total

Case Production: 88

VINEYARD DETAILS

Soil Type: Franciscan, Goldridge

Rootstock: St. George

Clones: Jackass Hill

GROWING YEAR

2020 will likely go down as one of the most memorable harvests in Martinelli history. The growing season was nearly perfect until mid-August when two nearby wildfires were ignited by a dry lightning storm. At this point in the berries' growth cycle, the skins are softening and developing favors. Because we religiously prioritize the quality of our wines and the integrity of our brand, we made the hard but crucial decision to not make any Pinot Noir from the 2020 vintage. Unlike the other varieties that we grow, Pinot Noir is susceptible to absorbing flavors from its surroundings because it is exceptionally thin skinned. Therefore, we are able to pick up terroir flavor nuances even within the same AVA in this grape. Luckily, we have Chardonnay, Zinfandel and Syrah from the 2020 vintage. Chardonnay is removed from its skins as soon as it enters the winery, so contact with any smoke flavors is extremely minimal. Zinfandel and Syrah both have very tough skins and did not absorb the smoke flavors we tasted in the Pinots. Though we were only able to process half the amount of fruit we do in a normal year, we are grateful for the outstanding wines we were able to make from the 2020 harvest.

VINEYARD CHARACTER

This rugged vineyard is referred to by the Martinelli family as "Jackass Hill", because only a jackass would farm a hill that steep. Jackass Hill is the steepest non-terraced hillside vineyard in Sonoma County, boasting slopes of 65 degrees. Lee Sr. is the third generation Martinelli farmer to care-take the original family homestead land; farming the ancient vineyard much as his grandfather Giuseppe had in the 1880s, without irrigation, pesticides, or trellising.

TASTING NOTES

Concentrated and rich aromas of sun kissed blackberries, Santa Rosa plum, and vanilla are in the nose. A seamless ride from entry to finish with flavors of boysenberries, fresh strawberries, and nectarines. A touch of cinnamon is present in the lingering finish.