

— R O B E R T —
BIALE
V I N E Y A R D S

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2018 BLACK CHICKEN

Napa Valley Zinfandel

Sourced from the same family vineyard that Aldo, Nonna, Bob Biale and the Biale family have farmed their whole lives, with additional grapes from our neighboring winery vineyard in the Oak Knoll District, Black Chicken stands as the ultimate expression of Zinfandel from the cool southern Napa Valley, and perhaps the most famous icon of Napa Valley Zinfandel in general.

Vintage Notes: Seamless season of heavenly hangtime and phenomenal phenolic development. February saw abundant rains, followed by lots of filtered light in spring and early summer. Both bud break and flowering occurred a bit late, but under ideal weather conditions, creating plentiful and even fruit set. Summer brought generous sun during the day and cooler marine influences, virtually uninterrupted by major heat spikes. The relatively mild summer followed by extended fall sunshine and moderate heat created near-ideal conditions for winemakers to allow their fruit to accumulate flavor complexity with gradual increases in sugar levels. Volume is looking great, up 20-30% increase over average crop quantity.

Harvest Dates: 9-10-18 to 10-3-18

Winemaking: Our winemaking begins in the vineyard with meticulous attention to detail and close monitoring by Bob Biale and winemaker Tres Goetting. The winemaking philosophy is to grow our wines concentrating our efforts all season long in the vineyard so that when the fruit arrives into the cellar, only minimalistic vinification is needed. We want the wines to speak of the soils from which they were grown.

At harvest, the fruit is hand-picked and hand sorted to ensure that only the best fruit makes it into the fermenter. The grapes are then crushed and gravity fed into open top tanks. The must is cold soaked for 2 to 4 days at 50°F. We then inoculate the must with commercial yeast strains. For color and tannin extraction, we do 2 to 3 punch downs per day. Fermentation is usually complete after 14 to 16 days at a maximum temperature of 86°F. At dryness, we lightly press to 100% Burgundy oak barrels of which 20% are new. Malolactic fermentation is completed in the barrels. The wine was aged in barrels for fourteen months.

Alcohol: 14.8%

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: The Oak Knoll winegrowing region is prevalent in this wine with its ripe aromatics and juicy acidity. The nose is full of vibrant black cherries, raspberries, cinnamon, white cake, fresh purple flowers, and subtle dried herbs. The entry is bright and gives way to supple, round tannins with a kiss of toasted oak. The lovely finish is the signature of this elegant and remarkably balanced Zinfandel. This wine is ready to be enjoyed immediately or worthy of 5 to 7 more years of cellar time.