

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

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2018 Monte Rosso®

Zinfandel, Moon Mountain, Sonoma County

There's nothing quite like it. Huge, twisting, gnarled, mountain-rooted Zinfandel vines with a view of Sonoma Valley, San Francisco, and the Bay Area - thriving plants that are still producing thrilling wines since their origins in the 1880's. Even the most jaded wine veterans are struck with awe upon seeing the great Monte Rosso Vineyard.

Louis M. Martini purchased this lofty site on the Sonoma side of the Mayacamas shortly after Prohibition. Labeled originally as "California Mountain" Zinfandel, it became the source for many compelling, age worthy, and underrated bottlings under Martini's namesake label. The Martini Winery has shared some of the prized fruit over the decades with several Zinfandel winemakers, and the Monte Rosso Vineyard® has gone on to achieve legend status on the Martini label and on other labels, including Biale.

At an average of about 1500' elevation, with its reddish volcanic soils filled with rock and iron, Monte Rosso speaks clearly and firmly as to its sense of place. Sometimes wine newbies wonder what all the fuss is about in red wines, but this is one of those examples of fine red so filled with tantalizing character that you can't help but sit back, sip slowly, and ponder the power of the site. Try visualizing those pioneering laborers digging into a remote Californian mountainside simply in order to grow delicious wine. To Biale, Monte Rosso is a national treasure and we are proud to be one of the fortunate winemakers to craft a classic from this rare repository of some of America's most historic grapevines. Long live Monte Rosso®!

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: 9-6-18

Alcohol: 14.8%

Winemaking: Our winemaking begins in the vineyard with meticulous attention to detail and close monitoring by Bob Biale and winemaker Tres Goetting. 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 23% are new. Malolactic fermentation is completed in the barrels. The wine was aged in barrels for 16 months. Only 210 cases produced.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: Aromas of nectarine, Bing cherry, red vine licorice, wild iris, rhubarb, and vanilla bean. A lively entry enhances the minerality and the zesty, natural acidity of this wine. Mountain tannins assure us of this wine's graceful aging potential.