

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

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2018 The Southern Trail

Napa Valley Zinfandel

Memories down the ol' dusty trail.

The historic Silverado Trail runs north/south on the Eastern edge of the entire length of the Napa Valley. The southern section of “The Trail” lies close to the city of Napa and is quickly gaining recognition for producing many elegant, polished, and finely balanced wines from many varieties – red and whites – that speak to the region’s cool and hilly conditions. Zinfandel grows particularly well in the area producing wines with dark fruit and lush texture.

The northern Napa Valley section of “The Trail” leads you to Calistoga, which is the furthest inland from the San Pablo Bay, creating hot summer days and the daily fog recedes earlier in the day. In the most southern sections of the Silverado Trail, now known as the Oak Knoll District, Carneros, and Coombsville, they are closer to the bay, where the climate is much cooler, breezier, and makes for a longer growing season. It has cooler nights and a longer incursion of the summer’s foggy marine layer. It was here in Oak Knoll in 1850 that Captain Joseph Osborne first planted Zinfandel in Napa Valley at his Oak Knoll Ranch, which by the way, was awarded Best Farm in California its day. Aldo’s Vineyard, planted in 1937, and the historic R.W. Moore Vineyard, planted by Pleasant Stevens in 1905, still produce two of California’s most recognized and sought-after Zinfandels.

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: 9-21-18 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. 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 25% are new. Malolactic fermentation is completed in the barrels. The wine was aged in barrels for 14 months.

Alcohol: 14.8%

Winemaker’s Tasting Notes: Aromas of dark plum, cotton candy, blueberry and blackberry. This wine is nicely balanced with deep mid-palate fruit, fresh acidity and dusty tannins. This is a very age-worthy wine which will continue to improve for the next 5-7 years.

1,050 cases produced.