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2020 Grande Vineyard Zinfandel, Napa Valley

Just east of the historic Silverado Trail near the town of Napa, lies an old Zinfandel vineyard that is one of our favorite historic family stories in Napa Valley. Dorothy Rossi and her son, Tony Rossi, take care of an old-vine vineyard that was planted by Dorothy's father, Theodosio Grande, in 1920—the same year that Dorothy was born!

This family tradition is a classic example of what gave birth to the international stature that today's Napa Valley now enjoys. At the turn of the 20th Century, immigrants settled in California's rural valleys to farm fruits and vegetables, livestock, poultry, raise their own food, and grow wine grapes, mostly Zinfandel, (and Petite Sirah) to sell to winemakers and to make their own wine.

Zinfandel was the consensus favorite among wine growers in early California: a hearty producer and highly flavorful grape that was perfectly suited to the healthy soils and sunny climate of California.

Theodosio Rossi was no exception. Having arrived in Napa from Venice, Italy, Theodosio soon planted Zinfandel, pears, prunes, and walnuts. He also built a farmhouse, chicken coop and barn, all of which still exist, as though having been preserved in some sort of agrarian time capsule.

Driving into the Rossi property today is like going back in time to the early days of Napa Valley. Not much has changed. Dorothy and Tony tend daily to the vines, coops and orchard. And every autumn the pickers hand-harvest perfect bunches of Zinfandel into bins. Starting in 2001, all those Zinfandel bunches began to be delivered to the Biale winery, where we cherish the fruits of the labors of Theodosio Grande and his offspring – a genuine and sweet family tradition that daily reminds us of Napa Valley's agricultural origins.

Vintage Notes: Conditions were ideal at the start of 2020 with mild temperatures that led to evenly developed clusters. The low winter rainfall resulted in small berries with concentrated flavor. Following an early budbreak and warm summer, harvest kicked off at the beginning of August. Although challenged by two wildfires during the harvest, most wineries decided to make only the best wines of their small lots, and Biale did just that. We hope that you will enjoy these wines that express the promise anticipated by the conditions of the early growing season.

Harvest Dates: 8-28-20

Winemaking: Our winemaking begins in the vineyard with meticulous attention to detail and close monitoring by Bob Biale and winemaker David Natali. Fruit is hand-harvested, sorted in the field, and sorted again at the winery. Destemmed, the grapes are then fermented in open top tanks with punch downs gently carried out two to three times per day. Pressed, the wine undergoes malolactic fermentation in 100% French oak barrels, of which 30% is new. Aged for 16 months in barrel. Only 297 cases produced.

Alcohol: 15%

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: On the nose, incredible notes of raspberry, pomegranate, sandalwood, and orange peel along with touches of cocoa powder, leather, baking spices, and brown sugar. Elegant entry with increasing notes of blackberry and cherry on the palate. It is long and lithe with supple tannins and juicy acidity.