

Cakebread Cellars



2012 Zinfandel Red Hills Lake County

Vineyards

Our zinfandel comes from a magnificent, high-elevation vineyard in the esteemed Red Hills appellation of Lake County, due north of Napa Valley. Located at the foot of Mt. Konocti, an ancient volcano, the vineyard tops 2,000 feet in elevation and boasts a perfect southwestern exposure, excellent air circulation, and well-drained, mineral-rich, red volcanic soils. Its warm, sunny days, windy afternoons, and nights chilled by breezes from nearby Clear Lake ensure full, even ripening of the three distinguished clones of zinfandel we harvest from the site: Primitivo, a Heritage selection from Amador County and a Mendocino Clone from the Lytton Springs vineyard .

Vintage 2012

After several cool, rainy growing seasons, the 2012 vintage was near picture-perfect, with consistently mild summer weather free of rain or significant heat waves. While Lake County can be hot during the summer months, 2012 brought more moderate temperatures, low relative humidity and significant late afternoon and evening cooling, conditions ideal for producing grapes with an optimum balance of ripe, concentrated flavors and lively acidity.

Winemaking

We night-harvest our Lake County zinfandel grapes to preserve their freshness, fruit purity and varietal expressiveness, then ferment and age each of our three clonal selections separately to maximize their distinctive personalities and ensure an extra dimension of complexity. After warm fermentations in both small and large stainless steel tanks to fully extract color, flavor and tannins, the wines remain on their skins for several more weeks to further enhance color and flavor extraction while softening tannins. In 2012, we aged the component wines for seven months in French oak barrels, 41% new, prior to blending. The blended wine then aged another eight months in barrel prior to bottling in December, 2013.

Tasting Notes

Introducing itself with lavishly fragrant aromas of ripe black cherry, black raspberry, red plum, blackberry and dark chocolate, our 2012 Lake County Zinfandel is rich and concentrated on the palate with dense, juicy, blackberry, dark cherry and plum flavors. Its long, succulent finish intrigues with savory spice, mineral and chocolate tones, making this bold, yet sophisticated zinfandel a fine match for grilled beef, lamb and chicken, as well as pizza and red-sauce pastas. Nicely balanced by fresh acidity and fine-grained tannins, this delicious mountain-grown zinfandel is delightful now, but will repay another 3-5 years of cellaring.

Grape variety: 95% zinfandel, 4.5% Syrah
Vineyards: 100% Lake County, Red Hills appellation
Harvest dates: September 8 – 11, 2012
Fermentation: stainless steel tanks
Barrel aging: 15 months in French oak barrels, 41% new

Alcohol: 14.5%
Total acidity: 0.57 g/100 ml
pH: 3.71
Bottled: December, 2013
Winemaker: Julianne Laks