

Cakebread Cellars



2010 Zinfandel Red Hills Lake County

Vineyards

Our Lake County Zinfandel comes from a heavenly vineyard planted at a 2,100-foot-plus elevation in the acclaimed Red Hills appellation of Lake County. Located at the foot of Mt. Konocti, an ancient volcano, the site boasts a perfect southwestern exposure, excellent air circulation, and well-drained, mineral-rich, red volcanic soils. Its hot sunny days, windy afternoons and nights chilled by breezes from nearby Clear Lake ensure full and even ripening of our three distinguished clones of Zinfandel: Primitivo and heritage selections from Amador and Mendocino counties. In 2010, we included 6% Petite Sirah – from a block of the same vineyard – in the blend. Petite Sirah is often blended with Zinfandel, as it contributes deep color, excellent tannin structure and added complexity.

Vintage 2010

2010 was the latest in a string of cool growing seasons in California's North Coast. The year began with substantial rainfall, which pushed back bud break, flowering and grape set by several weeks. After an unusually cool summer, heat spikes in late August kick-started full ripening. Cooler temperatures returned in early September, which enabled us to harvest our Zinfandel grapes at perfect ripeness between September 24th and October 7th.

Winemaking

We night-harvest our Lake County Zinfandel grapes to maximize their freshness, purity and flavor concentration, then ferment and age each of our three clonal selections separately to maximize their distinctive personalities and ensure an extra dimension of complexity in the wine. After warm fermentations in both small and large stainless steel tanks to fully extract color, flavor and tannins – with each fermentation tailored to the character of the individual lot – the wines remain on their skins for several more weeks to further enhance color and flavor while softening tannins. In 2010, after pressing the wines off the skins, we transferred them to tight-grained French and Hungarian oak barrels (the latter provide a warm spice tone), 40% new, where they aged for seven months before the final blend was assembled the following spring. The finished wine then aged another eight months in barrel before bottling in February, 2012.

Tasting Notes

Our 2010 Zinfandel showcases bright raspberry, black cherry and dark plum aromas complemented by intriguing dusty earth, black pepper and milk chocolate scents. On the rich and lively palate, it delivers pure, deeply concentrated black raspberry, dark cherry and blackberry flavors streaked with mineral and briary spice tones. Beautifully structured with sturdy, but supple tannins, fresh acidity and a long, rich, chocolate-y finish, this mountain Zinfandel wine is delightful to drink now, but will surely repay another 3-5 years of cellaring.

Grape variety: 94% Zinfandel, 6% Petite Sirah

Vineyards: 100% Lake County, Red Hills appellation

Harvest dates: September 24 – October 7, 2010

Fermentation: stainless steel tanks

Barrel aging: 15 months in French (70%) and Hungarian (30%) oak barrels, 40% new

Alcohol: 15.1%

Total acidity: 0.62 g/100 ml

pH: 3.70

Bottled: February, 2012

Winemaker: Julianne Laks