

2018 Salvation Late Harvest Zinfandel

Alexander Valley Vineyards and the Wetzel family have a long history with Zinfandel. The legacy began in 1978 when with our first vintage of Sin Zin. Over the years we often talked about producing a late harvest dessert wine. A long hang-time to allow the grapes to reach high brix levels and a special vineyard site were the combination needed for a unique wine.

The 2018 growing season began a bit cooler than the past few vintages, but we had a near-perfect fruit set with moderate summer temperatures and relatively few heat spikes. The mild weather led to a longer maturation period, allowing the grapes to ripen slowly. Harvest began on September 12 and the fruit had excellent flavors and balanced natural acidity.

The grapes for the sixth vintage of Salvation Zinfandel were harvested from a tiny two-acre vineyard on the east side of Lytton Station Road. The Whipp-Vandenberg Vineyard, also known as the SVWW block, was planted in 1981 and was purchased in 2000 by Wendy Whipp and Stewart Vandenberg. AVV fans around the country will recognize the names, we consider Wendy and Stewart as members of the AVV family.

On the morning of September 29 friends and family hand-picked the low yielding site, selecting the ripest clusters to maintain the perfect balance of sweetness and acidity in the finished wine. At the winery, the fruit was de-stemmed and fermented in half ton macrobins for quite a long time due to the high sugar level. After a light pressing the wine was aged into three older American oak barrels preserving the moderate tannins.

This dark, rich late harvest Zinfandel has intense port like aromas of blackberry and boysenberry jam, brown sugar, dried fruit, molasses, and dark chocolate. Spicy dark fruit flavors of candied cherry, blueberry, black cherry, and chocolate fill the glass. This rich and balanced wine is meant to be savored at the end of the day. This small production wine is one of the gems of the Alexander Valley and sells out quickly each year.



Food Pairing: Rich and balanced enough to enjoy by itself or pair with dark chocolate and raspberry.

Profile:

- Concentrated, great balance of sweetness and acidity
- Chocolate covered cherries

About Alexander Valley Vineyards:

The inspiration for the label was one of the fifty plates created by 19th century French artist Gustave Doré to illustrate John Milton's poem "Paradise Lost". The image of Satan falling from the heavens was etched in wood and completed around 1866. The poem and image have been favorites of Robert Wetzel since he was a teenager, so it was a natural fit for our newest Zinfandel. After quite a bit of brainstorming we modified the image to give it the opposite meaning by flipping the angel around and having him reach toward heaven to clearly depict Salvation.

Technical Data:

Grapes: 100% Zinfandel

Harvest: September 29, 2018

Barrel Regimen: Aged for 30 months in three older American oak barrels

Alcohol: 14.9% **Brix at Harvest:** 33 degrees

Residual Sugar: 13g/100 ml

pH: 3.35 **TA:** 9.6 g/L

SRP: \$45 **Production:** 375ml - 150 cases (12 btl)



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