

2016 Salvation Late Harvest Zinfandel

Alexander Valley Vineyards and the Wetzel family have a long history with Zinfandel. The legacy began in 1978 when we produced our first vintage of Sin Zin for friends and family. Redemption followed in 2001 and Temptation in 2004. Over the years we talked about producing a late harvest dessert wine, but our late October rainfall often meant the grapes could not hang long enough on the vine to reach the high brix levels needed for dessert wine. California's recent drought changed that.

Overall, 2016 was a more normal growing season than the last few years. While the drought was still persistent, we received much needed rain over the winter and early spring. The good weather continued through the summer with no damaging heat spikes. Yields were slightly reduced, but the quality and flavor of the grapes were stellar.

The grapes for the fourth 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 October 1, 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 in two American oak barrels and racked every four months for the first year to soften the tannins.

This dark, rich late harvest Zinfandel has intense aromas of blackberry jam, spice and raspberry. Intriguing flavors of chocolate, candied cherry, molasses, dried fruit, strong spice and blueberry fill the glass. The finish is long and reminiscent of chocolate covered cherries. This vintage is similar in style to the 2014 with a great balance of acidity and sweetness. Salvation can be enjoyed today or cellared for several years. It is limited in production and sells out quickly each year.

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

Accolades: 2014: Northern California & Best California Zinfandel - LUX Wine & Spirits

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: October 1, 2016

Barrel Regimen: Aged for 23 months in two older American oak barrels

Alcohol: 15.4% **Brix at Harvest:** 33 degrees

Residual Sugar: 3.8 g/100 ml

pH: 3.02 **TA:** 10.0 g/L

SRP: \$45 **Production:** 375ml - 83 cases (12 btl)

