



**Vineyard Location:** Grist Vineyard  
Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County  
First planted in 1869  
90% Zinfandel  
10% Petite Sirah

**Harvest Date:** 6 September 2021

**Harvest Sugar:** 24.4 Brix

**Fermentation techniques:**  
100% crush/destem  
Anchor NT112 yeast inoculum  
7 gm/L untoasted Alliers chips, air seasoned 2 yrs

**Elevage details:**  
Micro-oxygenated pre-ML at 90 mg/L/month  
Malolactic fermentation in barrel  
Neutral French oak aged 21 months  
TA 5.9 g/L, pH 3.45 at bottling.  
Alcohol 14.4%

**112 cases produced.**

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# 2021 Zinfandel Classico

Grist Vineyard  
Dry Creek Valley

I have a hard time getting my French gurus to take Zinfandel seriously. They don't judge wine by the fruity aromatics, which abound in many California Zins. They want the wine to behave itself in the mouth. Because Zinfandel ripens unevenly, with green berries and raisins on the same cluster, its texture is brash and grainy.

The exception is Dry Creek Valley, which always delivers classic Bordelaise elegant tannin structure worthy of the finest Super Tuscan. The venerable Grist Vineyard is the acknowledged jewel in the DCV Zin crown, and we are vastly fortunate to have been granted access to a couple tons from our friend and colleague Woody Hambrecht.

We picked at relatively low brix, co-fermented with Petite Sirah for its co-extraction properties (thank you Paul Draper for this trick). The wine pretty much made itself.

This result is indescribably delicious. Intense raspberries with oak toast accents lead to explosive fruit in the mouth, stylish texture and a long, minerally finish unmarred by alcohol. You just want to hug yourself.

Classy stuff. Unlike most "clown-style" jammy, impact Zins on the market today, this wine will age wonderfully for several decades, acquiring in the process some sexy aromatics like old Riesling does.

I like it with grilled sausages or rigatoni with a pancetta/gorgonzola sauce. It's also wonderful with classic Bordeaux dishes like Tornadoes Chateau Figeac (fillet mignon with artichoke hearts, truffle and bearnaise). Check out my cooking show, Gracious Living in the Time of Corona, for other recipes.

**My goal is to produce skillfully crafted wines that explore winemaking possibilities beyond the contemporary mainstream.**

*Clark Smith, Winemaker*