

RIDGE 2008

CALIFORNIA

ZINFANDEL

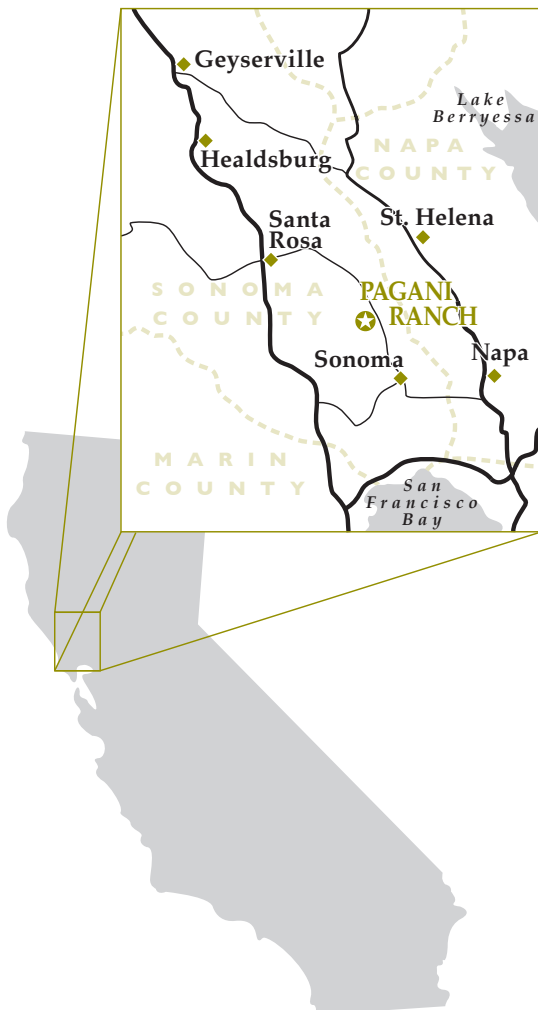
PAGANI RANCH

08 Zinfandel, Pagani Ranch, bottled 5/10

California's dry winter weather persisted for a second year, and the deep roots of these century-old vines provided just enough water to get through the growing season. We picked on September 30, crushing the small crop into five open-top tanks. To stabilize alicante's intense color, we co-fermented it with the zinfandel. Juice was pumped over skins for five days during a vigorous natural-yeast fermentation. Natural secondary finished by mid-November. Each lot was exceptional, and we combined all five for this year's Pagani. Racked to barrel early, its intense fruit and amazing depth permitted use of twenty-five percent new american oak barrels; the rest were one, three, and four years old. Over fifteen months, tannins have softened. The wine's complex fruit and superb balance will show best over the next seven to eight years. EB (3/10)

85% ZINFANDEL, 10% ALICANTE BOUSCHET,
3% PETITE SIRAH, 2% CARIGNANE

15.0% alcohol by volume



History

Since 1991, Ridge has made zinfandel from the old Pagani vineyard on the east-facing side of Sonoma Valley. The vines here were planted eighty-five to one hundred ten years ago. Pagani Ranch is a fine example of what we look for in a vineyard: low-yielding old vines, carefully tended by a quality-conscious family who, in this case, have worked the land for four generations. The vineyard's long survival is proof of its merit. An average site would have been abandoned during the thirteen years of Prohibition, or during the Depression.

Vintage

Harvest Date	30 October
Grapes	Average Brix 25.5°
Fermentation	No inoculation; natural primary and secondary. Pressed at five days.
Barrels	100% air-dried american oak barrels (25% new, 25% one year, 50% three and four years old)
Aging	Sixteen months in barrel

Vineyard

First RIDGE Zinfandel Pagani Ranch	1991
Location	Northern Sonoma Valley, Sonoma County
Elevation	100' - 150'
Soils	Gravelly clay loam
Vines	Zinfandel, interplanted with minor amounts of petite sirah and alicante bouschet; all 30 acres planted from 1896 to 1922.
Training	Head trained (no trellis), cane pruned
Yields	1.5 – 2.5 tons per acre

Growing Season

Rainfall	Below average (less than 30 inches)
Bloom	Early May
Weather	A dry spring and a warm, dry summer with no sustained heat spells