

# RIDGE 1999

## CALIFORNIA

### GEYSERVILLE®

#### 99 Geyserville Vineyard, bottled January 2001

Despite the season's late start, moderate temperatures and a long, lovely autumn fully matured the fruit at Geyserville; harvest began in the last days of September. The old zinfandel (c.1900) was picked first, then the young vines, planted in 1990. We waited until mid-October for the forty-year-old zinfandel and one-hundred-twenty-year-old carignane, finishing with petite sirah. Each of the eighteen parcels was held separate; naturally-occurring yeast and natural malolactic bacteria carried out the fermentations. Twenty-five percent of the wine was aged in new, air-dried american oak, the rest in older barrels of similar wood. This Geyserville is among the finest of a great decade, and will be at its best over the next seven or eight years.

PD (11/2000)

**68% ZINFANDEL, 16% CARIGNANE, 16% PETITE SIRAH**  
**SONOMA COUNTY** ALCOHOL 14.8% BY VOLUME  
 PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY RIDGE VINEYARDS BW 4488  
 17100 MONTE BELLO ROAD, BOX 1810, CUPERTINO, CA 95015



Ridge has made Geyserville Zinfandel from the Trentadue family ranch every year since 1966. The majority of grapes are grown on the thirty-six-acre Whitten Ranch portion of the property. We obtained a long-term lease on Whitten Ranch in 1990, guaranteeing access to this exceptional fruit for several more decades. All the vines at Geyserville are head-trained and spur-pruned; we leave six to ten spurs per vine. Over half the vines are thirty-five years of age or older, some more than one hundred twenty.

There were several good rains in November and December, and the new year continued with well-spaced precipitation and cold weather from January through March. The last days of March brought a big storm and—again—cold temperatures. A cool April slowed bud break, but moderate warmth in May induced bloom by month's end. We had thought 1998's record late start to be unique, but cool rains in early June set us back just as far. The weather caught the old vines in bloom, seriously reducing crop. Warm—even hot—weather in July moved the season forward. August was fine; typically, there was light rain at September's full moon. October continued clear and the grapes ripened fully, but almost as late as in '98. Yields on the old-vine zinfandel were down by forty percent; overall, the vineyard was down twenty percent. All blocks were of very high quality.

By the time we finished assemblage—having included most of the petite sirah and all the old carignane—zinfandel was below the three-quarters mark of our last three vintages. Even so, its character clearly dominates the vineyard blend. Brambly black fruit and elegant structure make this a classic Geyserville. It will stand with the finest vintages of a great decade.

**Location:** Sonoma County, 3 miles south of the town of Geyserville on the western edge of Alexander Valley.

**Acreage:** 38-year-old zinfandel, 12 acres.  
 9-year-old zinfandel, 15 acres.  
 119-year-old mixed blacks, 5 acres.  
 19-year-old petite sirah, 5 acres.  
 9-year-old petite sirah, 3.5 acres.  
 109-year-old carignane, 7 acres.

**Yield:** 1-3 tons/acre

**Soils:** Gravelly loam

**Climate:** Occasional morning fog, warm days with frequent evening breezes.

**Elevation:** 200'

**Exposure:** Southern

**Owner:** Leo and Evelyn Trentadue

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[www.ridgewine.com](http://www.ridgewine.com)