

RIDGE

VINEYARDS

Exceptional single-vineyard wines since 1962

Spring 2016



Geyserville, 1966-2016 Celebrating Fifty Years

Of the two earliest Ridge zinfandels, Geyserville is the only one we have made in every vintage since 1966. This year, 2016, when we pick the Geyserville grapes, it will be our fiftieth harvest from this extraordinary site.

The oldest parcels are a classic 19th-century field blend with zinfandel and carignane predominant. Geyserville was the first California zinfandel since the late 1930s to be made as a “fine wine.” Ridge began as a producer of cabernet in 1962, and beginning in 1966, we used the same traditional, pre-industrial techniques with the Geyserville grapes as we did with Monte Bello. Both were picked within the small window of ideal ripeness, fermented on their natural yeasts, and barrel-aged. Handled as though they were cabernet, the Geyservilles of the early seventies proved that we had one of the best sites for growing zinfandel in California—or anywhere else.

In her book *Vintage Timecharts*, Jancis Robinson chose seventy properties worldwide as examples of great vineyards. She included both Monte Bello and Geyserville.

It was the first time a zinfandel vineyard had been placed in the company of the top châteaux of Bordeaux, and Burgundy’s finest domains.

At Geyserville, “Old Patch” provides the wine’s backbone. This four-and-a-half-acre parcel imparts great depth and exotic fruit flavors. These—Geyserville’s oldest vines—were planted in 1891. They are a field blend comprised of 35% carignane, 26% zinfandel, 19% alicante bouschet, 9% mataro, 7% petite sirah, and 4% “other.” Other, in this case, can be a number of things, including cinsault, grand noir, grenache noir, black muscat, peloursin, burger, petite bouschet, aubin, syrah, bastardo, valdiguié, mortaou, criolla mediana #2, and a half-dozen or so table-grape varieties.

Geyserville’s individual character is often attributed to its relatively high percentage of old-vine carignane. However, the

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On the Market

The Purchase of Whitton Ranch

Ridge made its first Geyserville vintage in 1966, and we have made it in every year since. On this fiftieth anniversary of our first vintage, we are excited to announce that we have purchased Whitton Ranch—the thirty-six acres of vineyard land that, over the years, have provided the grapes for this wine.

In 1990, after buying the grapes for twenty-four years, we signed a thirty-two-year lease on Whitton Ranch with its owners, the Trentadue family. This allowed Ridge to take over farming, and to designate the Geyserville grapes as “estate grown.” However, the risk remained that when the lease ended, we could lose access to what we believe to be one of California’s greatest zinfandel sites.

The thirty-six acres of vineyard at Whitton include “Old Patch,” containing 4.5 acres of a field blend and

additional 2.5 acres of old carignane vines planted in 1891; they are among the oldest vines in California. Old Patch still yields over two tons per acre, and provides an additional complex element to the wine. Another 9 acres of zinfandel are fifty years old. We replanted the remaining acres in 1990 and 1991. Now over twenty-five years old, these younger vines on Geyserville’s stony, clay soil contribute intense fruit with the same high quality and distinct character as the older vines.

We are relieved and pleased to know we will be able to make the Geyserville far into the future. We honestly believe it is one of the finest zinfandels in the world.

—David Amadia, Vice President of Sales and Marketing



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site itself is by far the most important element defining the wine. The vineyards lie along the hills on the western edge of the Russian River's old riverbed. The river itself now runs a mile to the east, but thousands of years ago it left behind a unique piece of stony clay soil—a quarter-mile wide and roughly three miles long. In addition to beautifully-defined fruit, this ground imparts a distinctive mineral character to the wine. Nights are cool, which maintains firm acidity in all

varietals—even the naturally acid-shy petite sirah. The long growing season brings full flavor at moderate sugars, giving the wine both balance and elegance.

Geyserville exemplifies what defines any fine wine: consistently high quality, and a distinct character determined by the ground on which it is grown.

—Paul Draper, *Monte Bello* (1/16)

Spring Releases

2014 East Bench Zinfandel

Tasting Notes: Nose of raspberry jam, pepper, violets. Full bodied and rich on the palate with red berry fruit and supple tannins. Firm acidity and mineral notes add to the long, elegant finish.



2014 Paso Robles Zinfandel

Tasting Notes: Deep ruby. Black cherry, stewed plum, exotic barrel spice. Ripe bramble on entry, firm acid, gravelly mineral, medium-full body, round tannins, integrated oak finish.



2014 Three Valleys

Tasting Notes: Full garnet color. Fresh raspberry and blueberry fruits, clay mineral, exotic oak spice. Rich entry with bramble fruit, chewy tannins, creamy/sweet oak, and a moderately long finish.



2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

Tasting Notes: Ruby-tinged opaque purple. Ripe blackberry, cassis. Violets, espresso, dark chocolate, caramelized sugar. Concentrated briar fruit, full body, chalky tannins. Layers of licorice, cola, sweet oak. Complex limestone/mineral elements in a long, intense finish.



2014 Chardonnay Estate

Tasting Notes: Sun-bleached straw color. Ripe pineapple, green apple, pear, melon, biscotti, flint, toasted oak. Elegant fresh citrus entry, ginger root, limestone earth, lemon zest finish.



2013 Merlot Estate

Tasting Notes: Saturated ruby color. Seductive, rich bramble fruit; juniper, roasted coffee, clove. Lively mountain bramble fruit entry, chalky tannins, firm acid. Complex forest-floor, attractive oak spice in a lengthy finish.



2014 Geyserville

Tasting Notes: Dark purple/ruby color. Blackberry jam, candied plums, gravel, spearmint, sweet oak, tropical floral notes. Fresh, intense bramble fruit entry; lively acidity, elegant tannins, mint, gravelly earth. Multi-dimensional: layered, deep, seductive flavors; lingering finish.





RIDGE VINEYARDS

PO Box 1810
Cupertino, CA 95015



2014 Geyserville

"The 2014 Zinfandel Geyserville appears to be especially marked by the Carignane at this stage, especially in the lifted, super-expressive aromatics. Silky tannins balance the gravitas of the 100+ year-old Zinfandel in a focused, nuanced Geyserville built on raciness. Bright red cherry, plum and floral notes punctuate the finish."

— Antonio Galloni, July 2015

vinOus 91-94 Points

www.ridgewine.com/wholesale



Virtual Tasting



Join Us

Friday, April 29
10am Pacific Time

Taste along with our winemakers during a live tasting of our Spring Release wines.

More information:
www.ridgewine.com/wholesale