



2018 Gamba Old Vine Zinfandel

Starr Road Ranch, Russian River Valley

THE VINTAGE: The 2018 vintage started off cool in the Russian River Valley AVA, and brought moderate temperatures during the season, offering a long and steady growing season. This exceptional season led to an ideal harvest of stunning fruit and resulting in outstanding wines.

A cool Spring extended the 2018 bloom period, a critical time of year for growers, as the success of bloom determines our crop size and initial quality. There were some small weather events in the North Bay, but thankfully most of Russian River Valley was not affected, and flowering and fruit set was ideal in our vineyards. The set produced a slightly larger crop than normal in 2018, signaling a thinning pass, to reduce fruit on the vine to enhance quality.

Summer temperatures were cool to moderate with fewer heat spikes than in recent years. The 2018 vintage required patience given that the development and flavor maturation took extra time because of the cooler temperatures. There was a brief heat spike in June, however a cooling trend followed in July and again slowed ripening. August was very foggy and offered cool mornings where the sun didn't peek through the marine layer until mid-day, maintaining the slow and steady ripening and maturation process.

The cooler weather extended the season a full two to three weeks longer than average, which is always highly desirable. As previously mentioned, August was quite cool, and the heat spikes that signal the end of summer never arrived. The days of September had long, cool mornings and moderately warm afternoons, increasing hang time, allowing the grapes to develop more intense flavors. As grapes slowly ripen and further mature, the varietal aroma, mid palate and depth of fruit are concentrated. The smaller berries in our Zinfandel vineyards develop a very intense level of dark fruit flavors and result in desirable mature tannins in the wine.

The 2018 harvest is one of the smoothest we have experienced. The weather was glorious throughout October, with cool, foggy mornings, sunny days and moderate heat. Our yields varied, depending on the site, variety and clone, but overall the fruit appeared to be in all respects of very high quality. The clusters were small,

dark, perfectly ripened, and intensely flavorful.

To sum it up, 2018 was an exceptional vintage. The quality of the clusters, the flavorful juice and the natural acidity produced some stunning wines. The 2018 wines are showing great structure and deep concentration. We tasted and noticed the benefits in the cellar early on, with the wines showing fully mature and sweet tannins, outstanding color, nice acidity, and a gorgeous depth of flavors in tank. The wines were naturally and beautifully balanced at barrel down. They are fruit-driven, with a very good sense of place, structure and complexity, showing a laser focus from all our vineyard sites.

VINEYARD: The historic Starr Road Ranch is a century old vineyard located in the beautiful foothills of the Russian River Valley AVA. The vineyard is organically grown and dry farmed, offering exceptional fruit quality with extremely low yields from this heritage 1920 original planting site. It is cultivated without the use of herbicides or pesticides and relies on winter rains as its sole source of irrigation, as it has for the past 100 years. Foggy mornings, warm days and cool nights provide ideal growing conditions at this exceptional vineyard site in the Russian River Valley. This treasured old vine vineyard consistently produces intense benchmark wines, bold yet refined in character, year after year, praised and sought after by producers, wine lovers, and collectors alike.

TASTING NOTES: The 2018 Gamba Starr Road Old Vine Zinfandel exhibits a brilliant and beautiful, deep scarlet color. The aroma offers dark berries, blackberry compote, brown spices and a compelling hint of creamy oak. The wine is medium to full in body, with a mouth-watering, and full throttle fruit profile. Balanced, yet rich with dark black fruits, cinnamon stick, freshly baked butter pie crust with a note of cocoa and spice that fill the palate. The wine is woven with a lifting acidity that propels the wine giving it a pleasant buoyancy and freshness on the palate. The texture is polished, with soft leathery tannins. This is a classic Old Vine Zinfandel that will deserve a special place in your cellar. The finish is youthful, and intense, and enjoyable now, but will continue to get better with time in the cellar.



NOTES: 100% Indigenous yeast fermented Old Vine Zinfandel, 100% Russian River Valley, 80% American oak/ 20% French oak aged 18 mos., from dry farmed, organically grown, hand harvested, double hand-sorted fruit.