



## Tres Sabores

### 2006 Zinfandel The ranch contributes character A lengthy harvest builds spirit

The 2006 Rutherford shines with all of the sumptuous, berry-forward aromas and spicy, black pepper flavors one would hope for in a Zinfandel. Yet, there's always more to this wine, grown as it is on the western Rutherford bench. Can the terroir, place, home turf (whatever you wish to call it), *really* convey character to a wine? I've followed my Zins, planted in this alluvial canyon—this most special “spot” — through over 20 growing seasons now and I keep finding that “Rutherford elegance” to be front and center and lovely and *just* what I want in a Zin. Dry farming and minimal cultivation (just enough to spade in the cover crop) aid the natural expression —the “taste” I'm looking for.

We began harvest on September 25<sup>th</sup>, earlier than the very tardy 2005 but still later than the average for the vineyard. However, seeking to catch each lot at “farmer's market” perfection, the fifth section wasn't harvested until October 23<sup>rd</sup> and didn't go to barrel until the third week of November! Picking from the bottom of the slope to the top—at one to two tons per acre, berry sugars averaged between 25.5 and 24.4 brix. I'm working on keeping those final alcohols down, folks; I really am but that *complete* taste profile has to be there. Small but significant technical differences characterized the winemaking as lots were cold-macerated for from three to as long as seven days, average fermentation temperatures ranged from 76°F to 90°F, a few lots were allowed to ferment spontaneously (a process this vineyard loves). Everything was made in one ton bins—and the free run put to barrel for 19 months (a little longer for the 2006). I use about 40% new oak now—of which roughly 10 percent is American, the balance French. Bottling limited to 500 cases.

So the Rutherford Bench, classic ‘Cabernet Country’ does indeed turn out to be a pretty splendid place to grow and make Zinfandel. The aim of the original, three-winemaker, Tres Sabores project was to find out if grapes that had been part of multiple-vineyard Zin blends in the past could make a distinguished, single vineyard wine. Planted by an Air Force Veteran in the early 70's, the vineyard became our “front yard” when we moved here in 1987. Since 1999, Tres Sabores has sought to illuminate the ‘three savory tastes’ in every bottle of wine: the exuberant taste of the vine supported by the taste of the terroir and also complemented by the winemaker's personal taste and style. Zin just happens to be a particularly vibrant and delightfully impressionable varietal, capable of taking up the respective contributions of place and artisan style in a particularly refreshing way.

#### Quick notes:

**What:** Rutherford Bench estate Zin from 35 year-old, certified organic vines. Very low yield

**What we like about the wine:** Great balance, fruit forward, nice texture, “brambly”  
Spicy black and white pepper  
Smoky black cherry, Blackberry, Mulberry  
Stylish and elegant (that's the Rutherford Bench)  
A fresh Zip to the flavors and a long savory finish complement everything you  
(or your favorite chef) might prepare

Julie Johnson, Owner & Winemaker

[jai@tressabores.com](mailto:jai@tressabores.com)