

A Message of Humble Apology

Most Kind and Caring Importer,

I am the first to recognize many of you reading this file will not be amused therefore I am unconditionally apologizing first. I am not one to cause offense but I want to stop the persistent madness, the pretense, that you can import California wines yet deny with a blind eye, what is our state's major grape varietal.

I have been traveling for several years now throughout Asia meeting and discussing our wine trade with a multitude of people in many countries. By walking and talking, I get to see in real time what is current in each market. In Asia, saving face is important but some medicinal balm on a chronically sore topic should not be discouraged either. Growth and improvement should be paramount in any enterprise to remain viable. It appears that with many fine wine importers, they become stuck and cannot find themselves with the ability to break free to see new opportunities in front of them. Think of Seghesio or Ridge; then they quell further imports. These are excellent Zinfandels or Zin blends but then they stop. Stop means safe. Stop means less work too like being lazy. Brand name is evidently more important than the varietals themselves which is pernicious and totally backwards. This concept of having a grandfather's rocking chair with rusty selections demonstrably unchanging is not indicative of what the wine trade should be about.

If the knobby three-color television was retired long ago, why should anyone still have basically 1985 wine selections? You couldn't even give that same television away now to a non-profit charity; however, some wine selections from importers currently look like the original buyer retired and nobody else knows what to do *presently*. I am sorry to be the one to say this but it's true. Your selections should be much more nuanced, nimble and dynamic; selections need to be current, not static. You need to know your world varietals first to find the best expressions from very wine producing country or region. If importers took the basic effort to explore what are the best grape varietal expressions from each country, then they can fix onto what coveted labels they should inquire to carry.

I met a wine shop owner in Malaysia with Beringer Zinfandel earlier this year. Good! Was he interested in more Zinfandels? No. Did he care that Zinfandel separates California from the pack? No. As opposed to being nonchalant, he was better served promoting the wine to his clients using this knowledge to his own advantage. He already had the bird in hand but did not perceive it as such. This was, as is usual, the only Zinfandel offer his large shop had. Why? A pre-conceived false perception.

There is an esteemed importer in Singapore who carries Ridge. I grew up really not far from Ridge near Apple's corporate campus. They have been handling Ridge for many years yet, it appears, they never found the bright idea to add more Zinfandels to their selection. This should be odd but unfortunately is not. Another importer on that island jewel, a dominant player with depth in their selections, ironically has stultifying California offerings and, of course, not a single California Zinfandel. That's more than strange. They have selection depth from all around the world yet from the 4th largest wine producing country, they have deliberately calculated to entirely dismiss Zinfandels from their selection except one from Australia. Yes, Australia is synonymous with Shiraz but the Down Under Zinfandel is supposed to fill the hole in the wall for Zinfandels which is tactless. Sourcing from some US conglomerate without Zinfandel is supposed to magically suffice as a panacea, and of course, has

proven woefully insufficient. Their paltry Cal sales is the liability of purchasing and marketing not changing course to improve offerings from new sources via varietal. Management remains obstinate to ignore Zinfandel's presence to their own market credibility. Their California selection I personally saw in February was an inexcusable disgrace and not indicative of what California can really offer. I had to be there in person to know and see for myself. A pretty website wouldn't tell the real story. They failed the random pop quiz. Yes, I told the management directly so this is not new news. Jets fly everyday to Changi and now they know.

Another well-established large importer in Guangzhou with shops throughout China carried only one California Cabernet Sauvignon. That was their flaccid attempt to show they were serious about California wines. A request from Tianjin last year requested specific access for Grgich Hills's Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot thereby missing entirely what should have been first on their minds from this prize winery in Napa Valley for Zinfandel. I had to shake my head in dismay. This past May I met an importer from Shenzhen with a near complete listing of BV and Beringer wines and -unlike in Malaysia - should have had at least the Beringer Zinfandel but to their chagrin, did not. The management was so blinded by securing big brand labels that they completely missed what makes California special by grape varietal. Yes, you figured it out by now which one. The big boss, who at least was open to listening, was not entirely happy I could politely point this fact out as nobody else has quite possibly. Without Zinfandels in play, their California selection is not legitimately the best from California. It would be like no Merlot from Bordeaux. The hard truths are often not openly told we may assume. The selection was like an aged leaky diesel submarine with a bent periscope to see ahead properly. It's supposed to propel itself indefinitely. You couldn't pay me to go for a ride in a clunker like that but he's the captain. I'll stay at the pier please with a wreath to toss later, respectfully of course.

The following image is not to disparage the importer, but to illustrate how many labels from a colossus does not make for the wisest of selections via varietal. We can observe how Zinfandel never made it to the mix unfortunately:



深圳大誠國際酒業有限公司 葡萄酒價目表

(2017年5月)

	品牌	图样	品名	产地	年份	规格	经销价	批发价	零售价	
23	贝灵哲		贝灵哲加州白梅洛桃红 Beringer White Merlot California	美国	2015	750X12	60	75	168	
24			贝灵哲加州长相思干白 Beringer Sauvignon Blanc California	美国	2015	750X12	60	75	168	
25			贝灵哲加州霞多丽干白 Beringer Chardonnay California	美国	2015	750X12	60	75	168	
26			贝灵哲加州梅洛干红 Beringer Merlot California	美国	2015	750X12	60	75	168	
27			贝灵哲加州赤霞珠干红 Beringer Cabernet Sauvignon California	美国	2015	750X12	60	75	168	
28			贝灵哲创始者长相思干白 beringer Founders' Estate sauvignon blanc	美国	2014	750X12	95	125	228	
29			贝灵哲创始者庄园霞多丽干白 Beringer Founders' Estate Chardonnay	美国	2014	750X12	95	125	228	
30			贝灵哲创始者庄园黑比诺干红 Beringer Founders' Estate Pinot Noir	美国	2013	750X12	95	125	228	
31			贝灵哲创始者庄园梅洛干红 Beringer Founders' Estate Merlot	美国	2014	750X12	95	125	228	
32			贝灵哲创始者庄园赤霞珠干红 Beringer Founders' Estate Cabernet Sauvignon	美国	2014	750X12	95	125	228	
33			贝灵哲纳帕谷霞多丽干白 Beringer Napa Valley Chardonnay	美国	2013	750X6	192	249	450	
34			贝灵哲纳帕谷赤霞珠干红 Beringer Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon	美国	2013	750X12	376	489	882	
35			贝灵哲纳帕谷特选赤霞珠干红 Beringer Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon	美国	2012	750X6	1280	1665	2996	
36		BV 璞立酒庄		璞立酒庄加州霞多丽干白 Beaulieu Vineyard Chardonnay	美国	2015	750X12	95	125	198
37				璞立酒庄加州梅洛干红 Beaulieu Vineyard Merlot	美国	2015	750X12	95	125	198
38			璞立酒庄加州赤霞珠干红 Beaulieu Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon	美国	2015	750X12	95	125	198	
39			璞立酒庄-罗斯福赤霞珠干红 BV Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon	美国	2014	750X12	460	598	958	
40			璞立酒庄纳帕谷赤霞珠干红 BV Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon	美国	2013	750X12	335	398	680	
41			璞立酒庄乔治-德拉图尔赤霞珠干红 BV Georges de Latour cabernet sauvignon	美国	2013	750X6	1200	1416	2280	
42			璞立酒庄织锦珍藏干红 BV Reserve Tapestry Cabernet Sauvignon	美国	2013	750X12	510	659	1080	

地址: 深圳市福田区沙头街道天安数码城创新科技广场1期B座6楼610室
电话: 0755-83433128 传真: 0755-83433297

I met another importer in Hong Kong by chance walking to get a breakfast bite with undeniably a billionaire's selection at his fingers. When we got to talking about what did they have from California, it was top-shelf indeed yet not one single Zinfandel. Zero. The fascination was about distinguished labels with a diminished mandate on core varietals via country. It was another classic example of Asian sourcing. However, I appreciated his genuine lack of pretense and generous amiability to handle the wines he has. There are others in the trade with far less that would put on airs of being aloof and being ostentatiously sophisticated drawn from their underlying insecurities. Fine wines, for some, serve as a child's protective blanket from core vulnerabilities not to be easily challenged nor pierced as an armor; the values they place on wines by high price points are imbalanced to what should be the pleasure of conviviality and joy of open opportunities to remain both curious and current. He earned my respect by his person, less by his enchanting wine shop.

"It is easier to perceive error than to find the truth, for the former lies on the surface and is easily seen, while the latter lies in the depth, where few are willing to search for it."

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

If this message is uncomfortable to continue reading that is a good thing. It means you know you need to consider adjusting your selections. You will really like this quip below as I could not make this up. Fact is crazier than fiction. You can verify for yourself too. This is from that island paradise with the fastest humans on the planet, which demonstrates even with a dominant importer in the local economy, just how lost in the dark under balmy skies some in the wine trade truly are. How can the purchasing public learn more about wines when the importers don't know their own products? They need to slow down and think clearly to get facts correct. This is an embarrassment to reluctantly share but it demonstrates what not to be:

*“Our vast inventory includes a full complement of your favorite table wines and exclusive limited edition selections. Whether you’re shopping for Chardonnay, **Sauvignon**, Pinot Noir, Merlot or Champagne, CPJ has something for the curious and connoisseur alike.*

*We have a fine selection of **Napa wines from California**, Rieslings from Washington State, **Argentinean Merlots**, Chilean Cabernet Sauvignons and robust **Italian Chiantis**. Our selection of champagnes goes by the names Laurent Perrier, Taittinger, and Bollinger. Our sparkling wines from Chile and **Proseccos from Italy** can satisfy any palate or taste temptation. The full range can be seen online at www.cpjmarket.com.”*

My notes on Jamaican quotation:

1. Sauvignon? Sauvignon what, dear, pray tell? Cabernet, Blanc maybe?
2. Yes, Napa is in California. Thank you for advising us with our geography.
3. Okay, Rieslings from Washington. Fine, we like that. Then why identify California without a native varietal like they did with Washington? They are not sure what is the best expression via varietal from California so they just run with Napa. All the other countries they list by varietal but clearly do not know what is distinguished from California. This is a classic example of the two old buddies, Ignorance and his friend Lazy, again at work.
4. Yes, Chiantis are from Italy. We can wager they may be unsure what is the major grape varietal that produces Chianti. They just see Chianti on the bottles and not even curious what makes a Chianti. Yes, Proseccos only come from Italy too. Do they know where Cavas hail from? No. Now we all know.

5. The grand finale: Merlots from Argentina?! Argentina is first and foremost about Malbec. This is an unforgivable error. Argentinian is also misspelled. Are they honestly serious about the wine trade? Who has a selection of Merlots from Argentina? Sorry, I would have to see it to believe it. We can think they got their M's mixed up.

Don't let this sloppiness in conduct happen to your imports. We can all be sharper than this in our trade. All of us should learn from the mistakes of others if we are prudent. None of us would possibly advocate drinking and driving to promote more aftermath victims at the hospital or tagged under a white sheet at the morgue. We need no more cases of drunk driving to know it is harmful to humans both in and outside the vehicles in the hardest of ways. It's a poor idea to drive after another pour. Some experiences we simply cannot afford at any price and should be left untouched for our own good. Everyone knows it is dangerous but magically in the delusion of intoxication, people still persist to think they are different than others until they lose complete control at the wheel, both young and old. So, let us also strip away the delusions of what wine selections importers would *prefer* to believe than what are really the best based upon cogent facts via varietals. If we went to an ice cream shop, what would we think if it had only 2 or 3 choices? Nobody would consider that to be compelling unless they came wandering out the Gobi Desert. We need to all be wiser on how we can market our wines and expand choices for invigorating selections. I am trying to appeal to basic common sense for any importer to know what wines are best from each country. The distinct varietals need to be used for keen advantages to distinguish via countries. Syrah from Spain is not the best expression from Spain even if made well from an importing perspective. Notice on the attached tasting article from WINE (April 2017) it mentions 11 California (USA) Zinfandels and 1 Primitivo. There is a good reason for it:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zinfandel>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zinfandel_Advocates_and_Producers

Therefore, I am apologizing to each importer because the wines currently for export access – especially for Asian markets – are absolutely and categorically imperfect. I need to declare this inconveniency with transparency. Yes, these are imperfect Zinfandel wines and much like cut diamonds, they unfortunately have inclusions. None of the wines attached have scored the coveted 100 points by any major publication. Perfection is the ideal, but alas, that aspiration like a fleeting mirage, has been stubbornly evasive. These wines, however, are some of the very best Zinfandels produced from the land of Zinfandel. That fact you can take comfort in. These true gems you will be proud to import without apologies; they will be garnered with real praise to your consummate credit. Now we all know.

To be true, Zinfandels categorically are nearly always more affordable than Cabernet Sauvignons. Also, they pair better with spicier Asian cuisines. Many people prefer Zinfandels if compared to Cabernet Sauvignons in blind tastings. If you harbor an interest in California wines, your best call would be first and foremost to secure Zinfandels as the honest and best expression from the Golden State. Now we all know.

Do not be led astray any longer. Importers willing to slow down – unlike in Jamaica – and learn what varietals from what country that are each country's best expression will then find the right labels. This applies across the globe: be they from France, Spain, Italy, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Argentina,...and, yes,....now we all know from California. Let hard facts, like diamonds, guide your selections and no longer rely upon the mirage of brands only or false varietal perceptions to steer the wrong way.

Since I am familiar with the wines and have an insider's knowledge in California's prolific wine countries, if you share your purchasing budget for any amount, I will be humbled for the honor of working on a shockingly excellent mixed selection for your sage consideration and approval. This shrewd strategy has been performed previously in recent years with nothing less than radiant results.

With Humble & Complete Contrition,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Elam', located to the right of the QR code.

Don Elam

www.virada.com

export@virada.com

July 30, 2017

Visit the Virada Links page and Downloads to learn more about Zinfandels.

TASTING 试饮会



浪漫春日， 赴一场仙粉黛与普里米蒂沃的约会

文 | 编 | 张恬熙 摄影 | 刘伟强

Dating with Zinfandel and Primitivo

经DNA配对研究检测推断，意大利的普里米蒂沃与美国的仙粉黛很可能来自同一品种。虽然两者基因相同，但是由于种植在不同的地域及生长条件的差异，还是让它们呈现出各自的特性。本期我们搜集了11款来自美国和意大利的仙粉黛和普里米蒂沃葡萄酒，颇高的酒精度与含糖量，让这个春日，来得更加甜蜜。

According to the comparison of DNA, Primitivo and Zinfandel possibly come from the same grape variety. Since plant in different regions and the growth conditions, each grape have their own characteristics. This time, we prepare 11 wine from America and Italy of Zinfandel and Primitivo for you.



WHERE

试饮地点：广州圣丰索菲特酒店香榭丽舍扒房

广州市天河区广州大道中988号

营业时间：每日18:00至22:00

香榭丽舍扒房位于酒店六层，由屡获殊荣的行政总厨Christoph Pouls主理。主厨精选世界各地的顶级扒类，以独特的烹制手法带出鲜香原味，严选上好食材，融入无限创意，不断更新菜单惊喜你的味蕾。创意料理搭配由侍酒师用心挑选的索菲特葡萄酒，带来无与伦比的用餐体验。优雅现代的扒房设有两个步入式酒窖，一个开放式厨房，及可俯瞰都市繁华的私密用餐空间，缔造难忘的用餐体验。宽敞舒适的大厨餐桌是举办高端品酒会或私人晚宴的理想场所。

WHO 试饮嘉宾



Annie Cai

《葡萄酒》杂志执行主编；独立酒评人；WSET4级在研；美酒美食专栏作者。



Jerry

WSET4级；AIS意大利侍酒师协会侍酒师；Chianti协会特约讲师，新西兰葡萄酒学校讲师，悦星葡萄酒学院高级讲师。



Franco

WSET3级；意大利博洛尼亚大学葡萄酒酿造学士；意中商贸联合会葡萄酒培训师。



Tom

WSET4级在研；腾龙酒业市场部总监，葡萄酒培训师。

酒商代表：美夏Doria、ASC精品酒业Arwen、意维酒业Mina、咏伦意风Mandy、森桦会Vanessa、莫雷塔酒业Betty、罗富林洁芳葡萄酒爱好者：汤涛、林洁芬

《葡萄酒》编辑部：Estela、Kris、Victor、Linn、Whitney

《葡萄酒》运营部：林建伟





经DNA配对研究检测出，意大利的普里米蒂沃（Primitivo）与美国的仙粉黛（Zinfandel），和克罗地亚一个古老葡萄品种 Crljenak Kastelanski 十分相似，并据此推测普里米蒂沃和仙粉黛都来自这个品种。

虽然两者基因相同，但是由于种植在不同的地域，生长条件的差异还是让它们呈现出各自的特性。仙粉黛葡萄果串紧凑且果皮薄，颜色稍浅。而普里米蒂沃果串多，果粒更小更少，颜色比较深。此外，仙粉黛具有典型的果酱风味和高酒精的特点，普里米蒂沃则没有那么奔放，相对清瘦，果味更淡，有更多成熟的黑色水果香气。

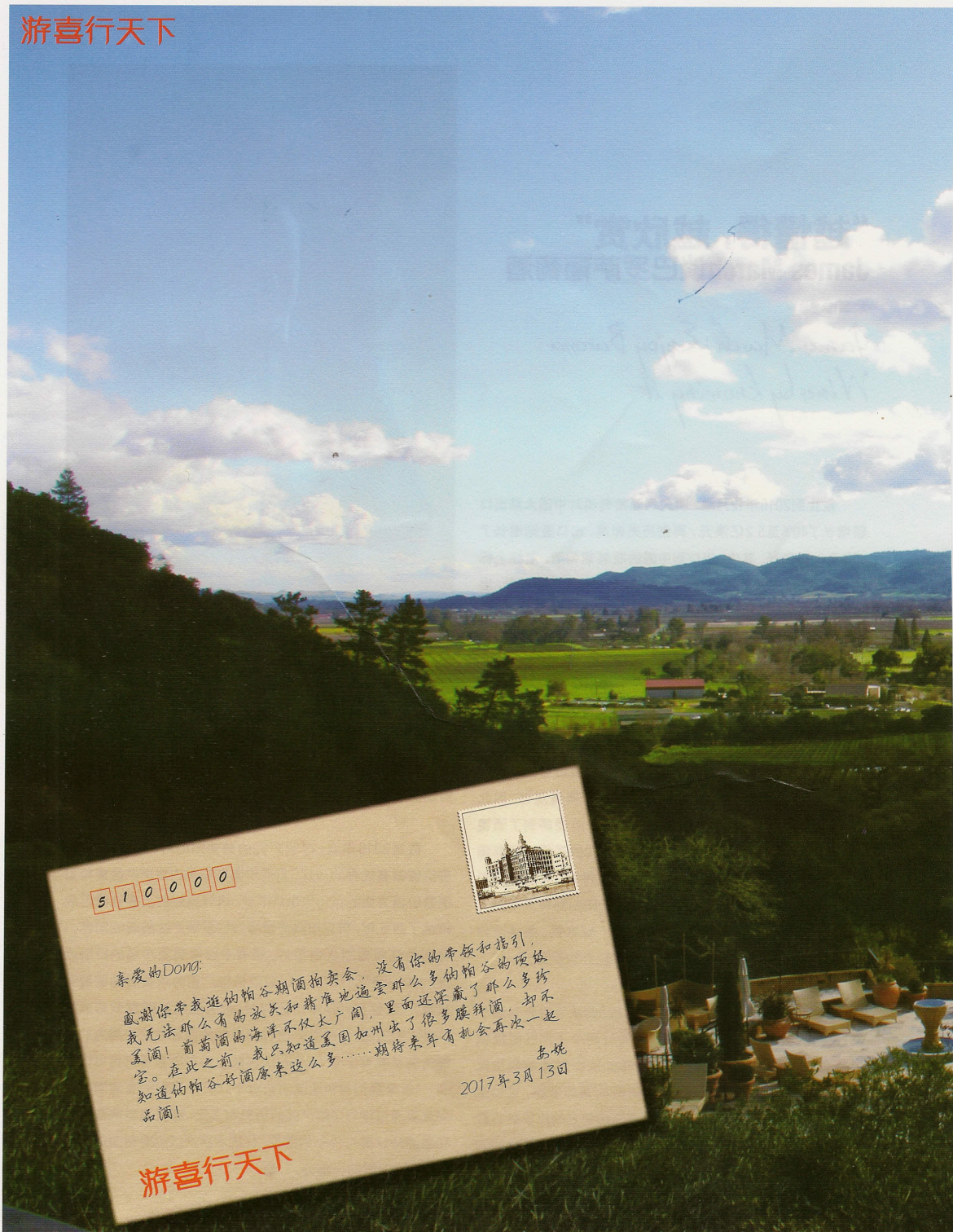
19世纪初，仙粉黛由淘金者从欧洲引入美国，并在加州（California）、索诺玛（Sonoma）和洛迪（Lodi）等产区繁荣发展起来。仙粉黛很适合在美国温暖少雨又不炎热的气候下生长。由于成熟速度不同，糖分含量高，多数的仙粉黛被酿制成酒香醇厚、酒体丰满的红葡萄酒，酒精含量可以超过15%。不同产区的葡萄酒风格不一。在纳帕谷（Napa Valley），仙粉黛酿制的葡萄酒李子干和葡萄干味突出，红色果酱、雪松和草香味浓郁，常与其它品种一起混酿；在帕索罗布尔斯（Paso Robles）产区，由于昼夜温差较大，出产的酒液饱满圆润并且柔和；在索诺玛产区，酒液则带有新鲜的果味、黑莓和胡椒味，酸度平衡、口感厚重饱满、层次变化复杂、并且散发果香和香料味，回味悠长。而在洛迪产

区的老藤仙粉黛，则带有果酱、黑莓、丁香、雪松、泥土和烟草等香气，口感饱满，酒体醇厚，风味浓郁集中。

普里米蒂沃得名于18世纪，一名牧师兼业余农学家发现普里米蒂沃葡萄比其它葡萄成熟得早，因此将该品种命名为“Primativo”，意为“最早成熟”。如今，普里米蒂沃主要种植于意大利的南部普利亚（Puglia）产区，嘉宾Franco提到：“普利亚大区的经济不比意大利北方产区发达，产区主要以小农经济为主，生产较低廉的橄榄油和葡萄酒。且很多葡萄酒酿造者选择使用传统的水泥桶、不锈钢桶、或者大桶陈酿，所以有的葡萄酒常带有动物皮毛的味道。”在萨伦托（Salento），普里米蒂沃则主要用于酿制IGT级别的葡萄酒，酿出的葡萄酒风格大方，拥有馥郁的果香和饱满的酒体。总体而言，普里米蒂沃酿制的酒有复杂的花香、动物皮毛及樱桃、树莓、红醋栗香气，单宁柔和绵长，回味无穷，酒精度普遍较高。但也有部分酒带有辛辣感。

浪漫的春天里，似乎总应该有些罗曼蒂克的空间。一个午后，在圣丰索菲特酒店香榭丽舍扒房，我们进行了来自美国4个产区的5款仙粉黛以及意大利2个产区的6款普里米蒂沃的对比品鉴。杯中流淌的酒液，时而化身成“粉黛轻点胭脂红，似水一笑月朦胧”般的娇美女子，时而演变为“我自横刀向天笑，去留肝胆两昆仑”般的铁血硬汉。在这个春日

游喜行天下



510000



亲爱的Dong:

感谢你带我逛纳帕谷酒拍卖会，没有你的带领和指引，
 我无法那么有的放矢和精准地逛那么多纳帕谷的顶级
 美酒！葡萄酒的海洋不仅太广阔，里面还深藏了那么多珍
 宝。在此之前，我只知道美国加州出了很多膜拜酒，却不
 知道纳帕谷好酒原来这么多……期待来年有机会再次一起
 品酒！

安妮
2017年3月13日

游喜行天下



纳帕谷： 不止膜拜酒，还有太多 你所不知道的好酒

文、图 | Annie 蔡金萍，编 | Annie 蔡金萍、杨翠婷

*Napa Valley: Not Just California Cult,
there are too many fine wines*

2017年2月，因为一年一度的期酒拍卖会，我第一次探访了美国葡萄酒圣地——纳帕谷。在这里，我见识了太多我所不知道的美酒，看到了拍卖会上人们为美酒而疯狂，也嗅到了投资的机会。本期带大家一起来探访这个遍地美酒的魅力酒乡。

It's my first time step into the Holy Land of American wine, Napa Valley. I found there are too many boutique fine wines here, I saw so many people crazy for the unique action wine here, and realized that there was an investment opportunity in wine business for the Chinese here. So, let's show you the trip and bring you to the amazing Napa Valley.

**Varietal Composition:**

90% Zinfandel
 5.7% Petite Sirah
 2.3% Cabernet Franc
 1% Syrah
 1% Merlot

Appellation:

Napa Valley

Harvest Date:

September 17th

Harvest Brix:

27.9°B

Barrel aging:

17 months in American & French oak barrels; 80% New Oak

Finished Alcohol:

16.2%

pH:

3.58

Titrateable acidity:

6.2 g/L

Total Production:

250 cases

2014 Zinfandel Reserve Estate Grown Napa Valley

Winemaking Notes:

Our reserve Zinfandel is one of the most concentrated and expressive lots of wine that we produce in a given year. Always the last of our picks of Zinfandel, it is generally one of the ripest lots of the year. In the winery we maintain an early aggressive pump over regime that slowly tapers off to a gentle sprinkle as the alcohol builds and the wine develops. This wine is aged in mostly new French Oak for flavor and body development, and new American oak for a spicy complexity and middle palate.

Vineyard Notes:

Our reserve Zinfandel comes from the Poca Ranch located at the southern end of Calistoga's boundaries. This land is where a very old alluvial fan fed out of Dutch Henry Canyon. The soil here is Bale Gravelly Loam, and is a mixture of medium and small rocks in a loose loamy soil. The moisture content is very low, and the drainage excellent. The soil profile is fairly balanced and perfect for viticulture. This vineyard is located in one of the warmest regions in the Napa Valley, and produces rich ripe fruit that tends to be very fruit forward and even jammy in nature.

Tasting Notes:

The 2014 Reserve Zinfandel has a great nose that reminds us of a warm berry pie. There are scents of blueberries and raspberries with vanilla and clove. This wine has aromas of roasted hazelnuts and aromas of roses too. There is a concentration of fresh berries about this wine, and a complexity to its spice. The wine explodes on the palate with big flavors of blueberries and boysenberries. There are nice vanilla graham cracker undertones. There is a smooth silky nature to the wine with a voluptuous body. The finish lingers for quite some time with flavors of clove, raspberry and caramel.

BALLENTINE

VINEYARDS

Varietal Composition:

88% Zinfandel
7% Petite Sirah
3% Syrah
1% Petit Verdot
1% Other Red Varieties

Appellation:

Napa Valley

Harvest Date:

Sept. 4th – Sept. 19th

Harvest Brix:

28°B

Barrel aging:

17 months
30% new American Oak
10% new French Oak

Finished Alcohol:

15.8%

pH:

3.48

Titrateable acidity:

6.1 g/L



2015 Zinfandel Estate Grown Napa Valley

Winemaking Notes:

We look for flavors of blueberry and raspberry syrup in the Zinfandel grapes to indicate ripeness. When squeezed the berries leave the fingers sticky from all of the sugar. Picking at this ripeness we feel this brings out the blue fruits and floral notes in this wine and leads to great balance overall. We leave 15% whole berry in our fermentations and ferment the wine using a special selection of yeast aiming at gentle extraction of tannin while maximizing our fruit concentration and color intensity. This vintage was pressed off at dryness and barrel aged for 17 months. The wine is a blend of our two Zinfandel clones and is meant to show purity of fruit.

Vineyard Notes:

Our Zinfandel comes from the eastern-most side of our Pocaí Vineyard. Here the rocky nature of the soil combined with the 40 plus year old vines work in harmony to increase the intensity of fruit from this vineyard. One of the warmest spots in the Napa Valley, this vineyard has no problems ripening, and produces high quality intense wines year after year. We consider this Bale Gravelly Loam soil to be our best fit for Zinfandel, and think you'll agree.

Tasting Notes:

Our 2015 Zinfandel's color has a deep purple intensity. This Zinfandel has blueberry/blackberry components and some bright raspberry spiciness. This vintage is exceptionally floral. It has classic flavors of black cherry, clove, and fresh rose petals. The palate's nature is silky texture. Very jammy, this Zinfandel is complimented by flavors of vanilla and cranberries. The wine has well balanced acidity, and an extremely long finish. Cherries and raspberry flavors last for a while.

History underscores Zinfandel's new tack

Jon Bonné, San Francisco Chronicle

Monday, March 4, 2013

Truncated articles for relevance:

Of the thousand things that keep winemakers awake at night, label approvals rank near the bottom. But Carole Meredith has had good reason for insomnia.

Tribidrag.

That's the newly revealed historic name for a grape we know remarkably well: Zinfandel. Meredith had asked federal regulators to approve the first Tribidrag to be made in modern times.

In mid-February, her wish was granted. Next month, 70 cases of the first California Tribidrag will be sent out into the world. Technically it will be Mount Veeder Red Wine; the feds approved Tribidrag only as a fanciful name.

All grist for the nerdiest of the nerdy - if not for the fact that Meredith is also the vine geneticist who sleuthed out the mystery of Zinfandel's origins, finding it identical to an obscurity in a single vineyard on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia, where it was known as Crljenak Kastelanski.

Now she and several Croatian researchers have added a significant chapter to Zinfandel's history. Ivan Pejic and Edi Maletic of the University of Zagreb, who helped Meredith with her earlier hunt, discovered a grape in the Dalmatian hinterlands called Pribidrag, as well as a 90-year-old leaf specimen from an herbarium in the city of Split. After several years, the researchers figured out how to extract DNA for testing. It revealed that the old dried leaf was, in fact, Zinfandel.

Grape had 'nobility'

Meanwhile, Zinfandel's - hence Tribidrag's - history kept stretching back in time, enough so that Tribidrag was used as Zinfandel's official name in wine authority Jancis Robinson's new book, "Wine Grapes." Historian Ambroz Tudor uncovered references as far back as the early 1400s; Tribidrag wine was traded with Venice across the Adriatic - significant enough to be referenced by name.

"What to me makes this so sweet," Meredith says, is that "not only did we figure out where in Europe Zinfandel came from, but it was important. It wasn't a junk grape. It had nobility to it."

All of which shines back on Zinfandel's current state. After a long wandering in the stylistic wilderness - from frivolous and pink to super-ripe and sweet - California's beloved grape has found a surer, more serious step. It is again the base material for wines that can, and rightfully should, be taken with as much gravitas as top Cabernet. Its best expressions provide as good a vehicle as Pinot Noir to explore the state's terroir.

It's too soon to herald its return from the seas of bombast. But an ambitious, and expanding, roster of wines provide the clues to a great Zinfandel revival.

That includes stalwart evangelists for Zinfandel's quieter side through the years - both the famous (Ridge) and the loyally esoteric (Napa's Sky Vineyards). It includes those like Mike Dashe of Dashe Cellars who have demonstrated that less can be more, especially in Zinfandel strongholds like Dry Creek Valley.

Two much riper wines reined in by high acidity - the 1968 Mayacamas Late Harvest Zinfandel and 1968 Sutter Home Deaver Vineyard Zinfandel from the foothills - **inspired Jay Heminway in 1972 to give up his Bordeaux dreams and plant Zinfandel in eastern Napa's remote Chiles Valley. "I thought the two of them were equal to any Cabernet made at that time," Heminway recalls.**

Heminway's Green & Red wines, now considered an object of restraint, would soon find an eager audience at spots like Chez Panisse. But they were challenging at first.

Heminway followed the farming of the time, picking at relatively modest ripeness (around 23 Brix, a measure of sugar), but his inaugural 1977 had such high acidity that it never completed its malolactic process. Thus it required two years aging in barrel, and another in bottle, before a 1980 release. "But," he adds, "that wine was delicious many years later."

Even Green & Red has notched up its ripeness over the years. Freshness and longevity are great qualities, but Zinfandel is not a grape for which most people are willing to wait.

Zinfandels are "the one thing we make in California that nobody else makes in the world," Twain-Peterson says. "So the fact that they're not taking it seriously? I take that kind of personally."

===

Is Napa Zinfandel facing a headwind?

By Jon Bonné, San Francisco Chronicle

December 21, 2012

In Napa, at least, judicious farming seems to have won out at least some of the time. Napa Zinfandels offer a dust-edged nuance that shows the variety's classiest side, and the best of our tasting absolutely echoed those characteristics.

I did wonder if the roster of Napa Zinfandels is shrinking. Our tasting was smaller than in past years, even factoring in that we didn't see the latest from a number of perennial favorites in our lineup this time - Storybook, Green & Red and Robert Biale, for instance. Perhaps the cool vintage required extra aging.

But at the same time, I wondered if Napa, where land has become shockingly expensive, might increasingly be laying its chips with more rarefied wine. Napa Zinfandel has been struggling against neighboring Sonoma on the price curve for some time now. At some point, would smart money turn to Cabernet?

I hope not. Not just because Napa needs diversity in the field, but because its Zins are particular treasures. Here's hoping we continue to see an abundance in the future.

2009 Green & Red Chiles Mill Vineyard Napa Valley Zinfandel (\$25, 14.7%): Jay Heminway carries the torch for old-school Napa Zin from the eastern area of Chiles Valley. With relatively little new wood from a 1,000-foot-elevation parcel that overlooks the remains of the valley's historic grist mill, this is wound up enough to need another year in bottle. Cedar, cinnamon, forest floor and racy raspberry and plum in a concentrated and notably tannic style.

NAPA VALLEY ZINFANDEL

The Chronicle Wine Selections:

Lynne Char Bennett, Chronicle Staff Writer

January 4, 2008

Word association: Chicken? Egg. Napa Valley red wine? Cabernet Sauvignon.

But there's another red wine on Napa's radar - Zinfandel. We found a majority of these Zins to be ripe but without overt alcoholic heat. The tannins are integrated, providing structure, and there's enough acidity to avoid "gloppiness." Some producers like Rubicon Estate, Neyers and Storybook craft Zins with aging potential.

Napa Valley Zinfandel is often a more elegant creature that pairs very well with food, including those with tomato, though the wine is well behaved enough to enjoy on its own.

According to numbers compiled by the "California Connoisseur's Guide to California Wine," Napa Valley's 2007 vineyard acreage (1,939 acres) is just under 4 percent of all California Zinfandel. Compared with the premium Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon commands, Napa Zin is very affordable.



94 | Green & Red \$30

2013 Napa Valley Tip Top Vineyard Zinfandel (Best Buy) Jay Heminway got his start in Bordeaux as a college student in the 1960s, working a summer with Alexis Lichine. He founded Green & Red in the eastern hills of Napa Valley in the 1970s, focused on zinfandel. This wine grows at the highest vineyard on the estate, topping out at 1,800 feet, where he planted a northeast-facing slope in the late 1990s. It's a fruit-driven zin, the freshness and sunny aspects pointed up by his team's work at the new sorting table installed in 2013. All that fruit seems to glow from within, surrounded by scents of bay and wild mushrooms. It tastes of plums and strawberries, while tannins grip the fruit with a fine earthen rasp, adding complex notes of cracked green peppercorn and black olive skin. This is a glorious Napa Valley wine, delicious to drink right now and one to brighten holiday meals in the years to come. (720 cases) *Green & Red Vineyard, St. Helena, CA*

CALIFORNIA

93 | Green & Red \$22

2015 Napa Valley Catacula Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) Jay Heminway planted the Catacula Vineyard halfway up his hillside estate in Chiles Valley, focusing on the musqué clone of sauvignon blanc. His 2015 is a distinctive wine that gains in stature for days after its initial sweetness begins to fade, and bright, crunchy freshness takes its place. We spent a considerable amount of time trying to describe the flavors of this wine. It reminded Luke Sykora, our California wine editor, of winter melon in a moon cake; it reminded me of jasmine, peppery green olive oil and bitter melon. There's nothing grassy or passion-fruity about it. Instead, it offers a glassy transparency, a wine that's delicious and remarkably pleasant to drink. (W&S 4/17; 312 cases)

91 Green & Red Zinfandel Napa Valley Chiles Mill Vineyard 2014 \$30 Precise and well-built, with briary dark berry aromas and a lively core of acidity and tannins framed by notes of black cherry, licorice and peppered herb. Drink now through 2024. 1,274 cases made.—T.F.

Green and Red Vineyard/ www.greenandred.com / Tel: (707) 965-2346

3208 Chiles Pope Valley Rd., St. Helena, CA 94574

GREEN & RED

V I N E Y A R D

Current Awards Summer 2017 & Past Articles

Green and Red Vineyards- Top 100 Wineries of 2015 and 2016
(Wine & Spirits).

2013 Zinfandel Tip Top – 94 points (Wine & Spirits), Year's Best
U.S. Zinfandels (Wine & Spirits) and Best Buy (Wine & Spirits).

2014 Chiles Canyon Zinfandel- 90 points, Best Buy (Wine & Spirits),
88 points (Wine Spectator)

2014 Chiles Mill Zinfandel- 92 points, Year's Best U.S. Zinfandels
(Wine & Spirits), **91** points (Wine Spectator)

2015 Sauvignon Blanc- 93 Points, Year's Best New World
Sauvignon Blanc and Best Buy (Wine & Spirits)

Green & Red Vineyard, named for its red iron soils veined with green serpentine, is located in the steep hills on the east side of Napa Valley. The planting was started in 1972 on ground originally in vineyards in the 1890's. 31 acres of vineyard are planted within the 200 acre parcel. Three separate mountain vineyards, Chiles Mill, Tip Top and Catacula are located at different elevations and different exposures. All our wines are made from these estate vineyards.



JELLY JAR

2014 Zinfandel

ABOUT JELLY JAR

Founded in 2005, Jelly Jar has been producing wines for over 10 years, primarily focusing on Zinfandel, and small lots of rosé, petite sirah and sauvignon blanc. The wines are hand crafted by Andy Pestoni, a fourth generation Napa Valley native with roots dating back to the late 1890s. Making wine has always been part of the family heritage and Andy continues the winemaking tradition with Jelly Jar, a wine reminiscent of those early days when times were a bit simpler.

VINEYARD

The family Zinfandel vineyard is situated at an elevation of 2,129 feet in the Lake County AVA. It was planted over 12 years ago from old California Zinfandel clones, including DuPratt and Deaver, onto St. George rootstock. We also included our family clone, the Domingos clone from Howell Mountain, which originates back to the early 1900's as one of the earliest planted vineyards in the Howell Mountain AVA. The combination of the high altitude, long growing season and well-drained rocky red soil create the perfect growing conditions for Zinfandel.

WINEMAKING

Harvest date for our 2014 Zinfandel was September 10-11. After hand sorting and destemming the clusters, we gave the grapes a five-day, whole-berry cold soak for maximum flavor and color extraction. Fermented for one week in stainless steel and aged for 10 months in 30% new French oak to add complexity to the rich fruit character.

TASTING NOTES

Spicy, lush raspberry and black cherry with a touch of vanilla and bramble. Silky and vibrant, well balanced and elegantly structured.

95% Zinfandel, 5% Petite Sirah – Lake County Appellation

Cases Produced - 1,790

Barrel aging – 10 months in French oak, 30% new

14.6% Alcohol

Suggested retail \$24

Jelly Jar Wines | PO Box 465, Rutherford, CA 94573 | 707-968-5221

www.jellyjarwines.com | info@jellyjarwines.com

OPTIMA

2013 ZINFANDEL DRY CREEK VALLEY

Vineyard

The 2013 vintage was produced from fruit grown on the western bench of Dry Creek Valley, 200 feet above the valley floor. The vineyard experiences cool, foggy mornings and warm days. Because there is a substantial difference between daytime and nighttime temperatures, the growing season lasts longer, so the grapes mature slowly allowing intense flavor development.

Winemaking

Hand-harvested on October 2, 2013, at 25.9 degrees brix, the fruit was gently crushed and destemmed, and fermented 10 days to dryness. Following pressing, the wine was clarified naturally by settling and then moved to small oak cooperage where it aged for 12 months. We used a blend of sixty gallon French and American oak barrels to both enhance and complement the wonderful berry aromas.

Tasting Notes

One could argue that Zinfandel is Dry Creek Valley's quintessential wine grape variety. Agree or not, this is Optima's finest offering of Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel to date. An absolute pleasure to drink. With an incredible aromatic bouquet, exuberant in fruit, explosive in wild berry, blackberry, cocoa and spiced coffee flavors that sink deep into the palate. Wonderfully bright and briary in the mouth, with lively acidity giving structure to the intense decadent flavors of chocolate, white pepper, mocha and plum flavors that are rich, deep and long-lasting. Absolutely delicious. Sweet creamy vanilla oak adds polish to the rich firm tannins and spicy powerful finish. The balance of this quintessential Zinfandel allows great versatility with food.

TECHNICAL DATA:

Appellation: Dry Creek Valley
 Blend: 98% Cabernet Sauvignon
 2% Petite Sirah
 Barrel Aging: 22 Months
 Alcohol: 14.9%
 pH: 3.69
 RS: None



☎ 707|421.8222 ✉ optimawinery@gmail.com 🔗 optimawinery.com 📺 [@optimawinery](https://www.facebook.com/optimawinery)



T I T U S
VINEYARDS

**2014 ZINFANDEL
NAPA VALLEY**

Vintage

Coming on the heels of 2013, which had been heralded the “vintage of the decade”, 2014 certainly had a lot to live up to. One of the driest winters on record for California, most of the rainfall came in February and March and was quickly followed by warm soil temperatures. Fast spring growth set the valley off and running, in some cases seeing bud break and veraison almost 2 weeks ahead of schedule. The lack of major heat spike, allowed for longer hang times and (coupled with higher degree days and drier soils) increased concentration and complexity – winemakers were again allowed the chance to pick when it suited them, at the best representation of varietal and terroir. A 6.0 earthquake on August 24th did not affect the crop at all, and although it will most likely be remembered as “the earthquake vintage”, the 2014’s will go down in history as the best of the stellar 12-13-14 vintage string, and one with higher than average yields and exceptional quality.

Vineyard

Our family vineyard is located on 40 acres of Napa Valley floor just north of St. Helena on the Silverado Trail. It has well-drained, sandy, alluvial soils and is characterized by its ability to produce complex wines with well-defined fruit flavors, gentle acids and naturally balanced tannins. Titus Vineyards Napa Valley Zinfandel is produced from 39 year-old vines that are planted on St. George rootstock and dry-farmed. This old-world winegrowing practice produces low yields of concentrated fruit.

Vinification

The grapes were harvested the third week of September, and we destemmed to tank on arrival to the winery. Once in tank, the wine fermented on the skins for approximately 14 days before the free run wine was drained to barrel. The 2014 Zinfandel was barrel aged for 16 months in 40% new American Oak. The wine was racked one more time before being prepared for bottling.

Wine Profile

Technical Information

Vineyard Manager:	Eric Titus	Release:	October 2016
Winemaker:	Phillip Titus	Aging:	16 months, 40% New American Oak
Appellation:	Napa Valley	Bottled:	December 2015
Blend:	85.5% Zinfandel	Alcohol:	15%
	10.5% Petite Sirah	Total Acidity:	5.9 g/l
	4% Malbec	pH:	3.78
Cases Produced:	1993		
Harvested:	September 18 th & 24 th , 2014		

GRGICH HILLS ESTATE

NAPA VALLEY



WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Alcohol.....15.5% by volume
 Fermentation...indigenous yeast;
 pressed off skins
 early to retain fruit
 character
 Harvest date....October 3-20, 2012
 Sugar26.7° Brix (average)
 Bottling date....January 22-28, 2014
 Release date.....May 2016
 Total acid5.5 g/L
 pH3.88
 Time in oak.....15 months
 Type of oak.....large French oak
 casks
 Production.....8,304 cases (12/750 ml.)
 Blend98% Zinfandel
 2% Petite Sirah

2012 ZINFANDEL

ESTATE GROWN • NAPA VALLEY

VINTAGE: We enjoyed a wonderful vintage from start to finish in 2012. A gentle spring allowed for textbook flowering and fruit set, followed by a long procession of warm, sunny days with no nasty heat spikes. Thanks to the excellent weather, the longer-than-average growing season produced wonderfully balanced and ripe grapes.

VINEYARD: Our 34-acre vineyard above Calistoga is the warmest of our five vineyards and the sole source of our Zinfandel. Its northeast exposure catches abundant morning sun but is shaded from the hot, late afternoon sun and combined with the vineyard's gravelly loam soils, creates the perfect spot to grow this varietal. We farm all of our vineyards naturally, without artificial pesticides or herbicides, and they are certified organic.

THE WINE: We co-fermented the Zinfandel with a touch of Petite Sirah to add complexity and structure and then aged the wine in large oak casks so the flavors are well integrated but not overwhelmed by oak. This food-friendly Zinfandel's fresh flavors of ripe blackberries, black cherries and a hint of pepper on the long finish is the perfect match for grilled meats with barbecue sauce, sausage pizza and hearty pastas.

AS SEEN IN




MAY 2016



91 ^{points}  Grgich Hills Estate
2012 ZINFANDEL, *Napa Valley*

Bright, buoyant, intensely fruity and absolutely unwavering in its keen varietal focus, this impressively extracted effort is long on substance and stuffing yet is very well-structured for the ample and very ripe wine that it is. It is supple to start and keeps heat nicely in check while showing a good bit of grippy, young back-palate tannins, and, if not inordinately rough at the finish, it is a Zinfandel that fully deserves age. It is so deep in fruit that it is certain to tempt hasty drinking, but this is serious wine to cellar away for another three to five years.

 TWO STARS: (91-94 points) A highly distinctive wine. Likely to be memorable.

P.O. Box 450 • 1829 St. Helena Hwy. • Rutherford, CA 94573
Tel: (707) 963-2784 • Fax: (707) 963-8725 • facebook.com/GrgichHillsEstate

AS SEEN IN AUGUST 2016

WINE ENTHUSIAST

BUYING GUIDE



90 **Grgich Hills 2012 Estate Grown Zinfandel (Napa Valley).** This is an exuberantly fruity, spicy and robust wine, speckled with 2% Petite Sirah. Dark and full of red berry flavor, the palate is dusted in brown sugar and black pepper. Ripe and concentrated, it drinks smooth and elegant despite its serious power. —V.B.

abv: 15.5%

Price: \$36

AS SEEN IN



JUNE 2016



90 Grgich Hills Estate 2012 ZINFANDEL, Napa Valley

Medium ruby; fragrant, spicy, black cherry and blackberry fruit aroma with herbal notes (and some tasters noting a trace of sulfur); medium-full to full body; rich, textured, brambly, dark berry fruit flavors with well integrated oak and hints of toffee and black pepper; full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Nicely balanced, and easy and enjoyable to drink now. **VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

P.O. Box 450 • 1829 St. Helena Hwy. • Rutherford, CA 94573
Tel: (707) 963-2784 • Fax: (707) 963-8725 • www.grgich.com