

# 2023 PETER FRANUS BRANDLIN VINEYARD ZINFANDEL



Vineyard:	Brandlin Vineyard 100% Mount Veeder
Composition:	90% Zinfandel 10% Charbono, Mourvèdre, Carignane
Harvest Date:	October 17, 2023
Fermentation:	15 days, peak temperature 84°
Maceration:	12 days total before pressing
Oak aging:	16 months 100% French Oak 30% new "Burgundian Coopers"
Bottling Date:	March 18, 2025
Production:	258 cases 750ml

TA 6.0 g/L

pH 3.68

Alc. 14.4%

RS 0.64 g/L

As my mother used to say when I would take her up to Brandlin Vineyard, high in the hills of Mount Veeder, "this is as close to heaven as I am going to get." It's a magnificent and magical setting that ultimately finds its way into the wine. There are many well-made technically sound wines out in the marketplace, but few can capture the soul and personality offered by Brandlin. Since 1991 I have worked with this vineyard, and each vintage I can feel the energy and excitement because I know these are grapes that will never disappoint!

In the early 1920s, Henry Brandlin and sons Richard and Chester began planting vines on an eastern exposure hillside 1200 feet above the Napa Valley floor. They adhered to the regimen of "field blend"—a mix of different varieties. Today these are probably the oldest vines on Mount Veeder, and they continue to produce intensely flavored grapes, growing for all these years without any irrigation other than the winter and spring rains. The vines are head-trained, independent of any trellis, and do not require much manipulation.

2023 was one of the longest growing seasons in recent memory. Moisture from abundant winter rains kept the vines healthy throughout the summer and modest temperatures delayed harvest well into October—nearly a month later than usual. The result—intensely flavored grapes picked at optimum maturity producing wines with elegance, purity, and complexity. The vintage of a lifetime perhaps??

I like to ferment our Zinfandels at temperatures slightly lower than those for Bordeaux reds to accentuate the zesty and forward fruit character of the variety. Aging exclusively in Burgundian French oak barrels adds complexity as well as refinement to the wine. In fact, I often feel that Brandlin Zin is more akin to a rich Pinot Noir than a Bordeaux Red. It's more about complexity and nuance rather than power.

Our 2023 is a youthful dark ruby in color, with an enticing nose, a kaleidoscope of aromas—cinnamon, bay, black raspberry, white pepper, allspice, thyme, and a rose petal note. The wine is both elegant and complex with its intricate array of flavors and aromas not often found in Zinfandel. Medium bodied, the palate gets a surprise with the extensive raspberry and anise flavors. Tannins and acid in perfect balance, ultimately resulting in a refreshing wine that invites you back for another glass—and another. My criterion for a delicious wine!

My 23<sup>rd</sup> vintage of Brandlin Zinfandel—it's been a magical ride!