

2008 PETER FRANUS BRANDLIN VINEYARD ZINFANDEL



Vineyards:	Brandlin Vineyard 100% Mount Veeder
Composition:	92% Zinfandel 8% Charbono, Mourvèdre, Carignane
Harvest Date:	September 26, 2008
Fermentation:	82°
Maceration:	15 days
Oak aging:	17 months 100% French Oak 40% new "Burgundian Coopers"
Bottling Date:	March 10, 2010
Production:	807 cases 750ml

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 where you can truly feel the energy 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.

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. 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 without lots of vineyard manipulation, they perform every year. I have worked with this vineyard since 1991, and it is impossible to point to a "weak" vintage.

Living in Napa Valley, we have become fairly accustomed to predictable un-extreme weather. 2008 was a bit of a wake-up call. Spring frost struck numerous areas diminishing crop levels significantly. Extreme heat in May followed by cool rainy weather affected bloom and berry set as well. Forest fires in June eerily blackened the summer skies. Heat returned--100°+--in late August and early September that quickly catapulted us into harvest.

The Brandlin fruit always achieves great color. The 2008 is a youthful dark ruby and prepares you for the unmistakable terroir of the vineyard—crushed stone, bramble fruit, baking spices, bay, truffle and earth. The wine has a depth, focus, structure, and complexity uncommon in Zinfandel, the hallmark of the Brandlin Vineyard. This 2008 is a seductive, voluptuous, and seamless wine with a long and smooth finish. Tannins are supple with no hard edges. Aging in French oak adds another layer of complexity and elegance.

This is my 18th vintage of Brandlin Zinfandel. The Mount Veeder appellation may be a perfect environment for exciting Zinfandel—I put in as evidence our 2008!