2001 FRANUS ZINFANDEL
MOUNT VEEDER BRANDLIN VINEYARD
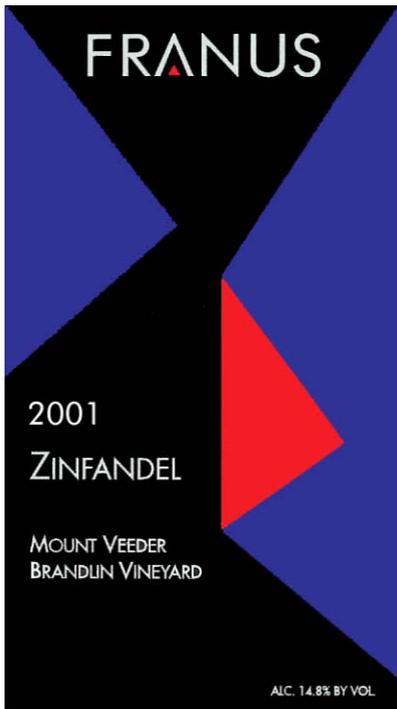
Vineyard:	Brandlin Vineyard, Mount Veeder
Composition:	92% Zinfandel 8% Charbono, Mourvèdre, Carignane
Harvest Date:	September 19, 2001
Fermentation:	15 days, peak temperature 85°
Maceration:	34 days total, before pressing
Oak Aging:	15 months 100% French "Burgundy coopers" 33% new
Bottling Date:	February 28, 2003
	1400 cases produced

I have had the privilege to work with the magnificent Brandlin Vineyard since 1991. The picturesque head-trained vines—60 to 80 years old--are not irrigated and face the east about 1200 feet above Napa Valley. The vineyard is amazingly consistent, and each year I wonder what kind of wine it will offer me, reflecting all the variables and idiosyncrasies of the growing season. I treasure my walks through the vineyard with Chester Brandlin as I imagine the history that the vines have endured for all these decades.

I would have to say that the 2001 Brandlin stylistically takes us to Bordeaux, and when compared to other Brandlin vintages, most resembles the 1997. As I look back on my winemaking notes, although more intuitive than intentional, it looks like I treated the wine similarly to how I make my Cabernet. The result is a structure and character away from the super-ripe sweet style, which I think unfortunately is hurting the reputation of Zinfandel. This is a wine that does beg for food.

The deep ruby color invites you to take in the nose. There it is, that unmistakable Brandlin terroir. Complex aromas of raspberry-blueberry-boysenberry are made more intriguing by mineral notes. True to the Brandlin character of taking a little time to express itself, the wine continues to open as it invites you back for another sniff, another taste, to explore what else is there.

I am pleased to be able to call this wine lively, refreshing, and elegant, words rarely used in describing Zinfandel, but further testimony to what a unique vineyard Brandlin truly is. Like the 1997 which is aging gracefully, the 2001 should do the same.