

BROWN

NAPA VALLEY

BROWN ESTATE 2011 MICKEY'S BLOCK ZINFANDEL

Composition	100% Estate Grown Zinfandel
Vineyard Source	Mickey's Block, Brown Estate
Appellation	Chiles Valley District, Napa Valley
Barrel Aging	12 months in 30% new oak, 50/50 French/American
Alcohol	15.2% by vol.
Production	700 cases in 12 x 750ml format

Vineyard Source

Our Mickey's Block zinfandel vineyard is located on the far west side of our property beside a seasonal stream at an elevation of 1100 ft. The soils are volcanic, rocky, and mineral rich, with ideal quantities of sand and clay. This tiny six-acre vineyard has long been coveted for its unusually small clusters and berry size, which provide maximum intensity due to the high ratio of skins to volume. Mickey's Block is our only zinfandel vineyard with a north-south orientation. Shaded in the morning, it gets the afternoon and evening sun, and is subject to a diurnal shift in temperature during the ripening season that allows us to gain maximal extraction and intensity.

Growing Season

The 2011 growing season was plagued by an unusually long stretch of spring rains, resulting in more shatter than normal which in turn required extended time and care – literally known as triage – at the sorting table during crush, to remove the “shot” berries. But even as we bemoaned 2011's diminished yield, it was precisely that extra shatter brought on by the heavy spring rains that saved us during the unrelenting rains that hit at harvest. Periodic breaks in the fall rainy season allowed the loose clusters to dry out and continue ripening. It was a rollercoaster ride – as growing zinfandel tends to be – watching the fruit and hoping the brix would get to the right levels. Knowing just when to bring the fruit in was a guessing game because even with the best technology on hand we can only predict the weather to a limited degree. We usually take 30 days to harvest all of our fruit, but in 2011 we were done in less than two weeks. The history of this wild growing season is now bottled in our 2011 wines, and it is truly a thriller. Like a sailor who's been out at sea battling stormy weather to make it home, the 2011 vintage has a spectacular story to tell.

Tasting Notes

Deep, dark, and intensely brooding, our 2011 Mickey's Block zin begs to be understood. Its trademark “yang” characteristics of black and blue fruits provide enticing undertones to buoyant floral notes of purple bearded iris, tuberose, lavender, and mandarin, leading to chamomile, a touch of allspice, and a persistent allusion to smoky burlap-wrapped, clove-studded whole pig over open flame, complete with smoldering embers and damp earth. This evocative note further surprises by summoning forth a hint of orange Creamsicle that enhances the silky taffeta mouthfeel. Full and seamless integration of lush juicy fruit, subtle spice, wood-fired game, corseted structure, and silky sweet tannins. Sublime decadence on the palate. Drink now through 2020.