

BROWN

NAPA VALLEY

BROWN ESTATE 2011 WESTSIDE ZINFANDEL

Composition	100% Estate Grown Zinfandel
Vineyard Source	Westside Vineyard, Brown Estate
Appellation	Chiles Valley District, Napa Valley
Barrel Aging	12 months in 30% new oak 50/50 French American
Alcohol	15.8% by vol.
Production	400 cases in 12 x 750ml format

Vineyard Source

Our Westside zinfandel takes its name from the westerly location on our estate property where its namesake vineyard – a true outlier in every sense – grows. This far-flung corner of our land, home also to our small but heroic chardonnay vineyard, is our own wild, wild West. Volcanic and desert-like, the soil “out there” is rich with minerals. It also poses formidable challenges for flora that seek to thrive there. Concealed beneath the brushy floor of an adjacent chaparral forest are boulders the size of Volkswagen Bugs. In this roughneck wilderness, the vines themselves are subject in the morning to the coldest temperatures anywhere on our property, and in the afternoon, the hottest. These extreme conditions yield extraordinary zinfandel fruit that embodies a rarefied balance between ripeness and structure, a winning combination that produces one of the most stunning examples of the zinfandel varietal you’ll find anywhere.

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

Our 2011 Westside Zinfandel is a sultry starlet in the making, its gorgeous garnet core and crimson rim aptly signaling the pure magic that awaits. Hallmark characteristics of wild strawberries in the field and dried hibiscus and rose petal potpourri lead to black cherry cola with spicy cloves intertwined with layers of rich heavy cream, brown sugar, and candied citrus. Further investigation reveals delicate notes of cedar, flint, and smoke. In contrast to previous vintages this wine is slightly deeper in color and intensity, yet there is a subtle vulnerability that belies the nose – present only on the palate, it delivers luxurious silky texture, seamless integration, and gentle, supple tannins. Drink now through 2023.