

OTTIMINO

Ottimino Vineyard 2007 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY PRIMITIVO

Ottimino Vineyard, “our home ranch,” is planted where Ottimino Christiani had previously nurtured his prodigious apple orchard. It lies along the same ridgeline as our Von Weidlich and Rancho Bello Vineyards, and shares their Goldridge soil structure and temperate weather. A small portion of Ottimino Vineyard is planted to the Zinfandel cousin called Primitivo. Zinfandel and Primitivo were determined to be clones of the same variety by Carole Meredith at UC Davis in 2001. After determining that both Primitivo in Italy and Zinfandel in California made extremely similar wines, and that these wines also resembled wines made in Croatia, Meredith found a genetic match in the vineyard of Ivica Radunić in Kaštel Novi, Croatia. This variety, called Crijenak Kaštelanski (“Kaštela Red”), appears to represent Primitivo/Zinfandel in its original incarnation—and it was a lucky hit, as there were only nine vines of this variety remaining amongst the thousands of vines in the vineyard!

The 2007 vintage provided excellent ripening conditions for this block of Primitivo, and we decided to keep it separate from the Ottimino Vineyard Zinfandel and bottle a few hundred cases. We harvested in late September, about the same time as our Zinfandel blocks—and, given that Primitivo matures earlier than Zinfandel (one of the differences that makes the two of them “clones,” and not identical grapes), this “hang time” guaranteed optimal fruit concentration. We crushed the hand-picked fruit into small half-ton fermenters, and allowed it to ferment with natural yeast. The bins were punched down three to five times daily to maximize extraction. The wine went dry after 16 days, at which time it was pressed off directly to barrels. Malolactic fermentation finished during aging in 50% new French oak custom-built for Ottimino by Roberts Cooperage. The wine was racked quarterly and bottled without fining.

TASTING NOTES:

Aromas of ripe blackberry, orange spice, bramble and black cherry are well-integrated with French oak. The wine’s entry is velvety, and the flavors follow on with blackberry jam, ripe cranberry and cocoa, all ringing out in a mouth-coating and lengthy finish.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Production Details		Analytical Data	
Blend:	100% Primitivo	Harvested:	September 28, 2007
Vineyard:	Ottimino		Brix 25.1 °
Appellation:	Russian River Valley		T.A. 6.6 g/l
Cooperage:	Roberts (custom-built) & Demptos		pH 3.56
Aging:	Twenty months	Bottled:	July 30, 2009
Barrel Age:	50% new & 50% 2-year-old		T.A. 5.6 g/l
Production:	170 cases produced		pH 3.82