



MARTINELLI  
WINERY & VINEYARDS

**Jackass Hill Zinfandel**  
**Russian River Valley**  
**2015**

**Vineyard Character**

This rugged vineyard is referred to by the Martinelli family as "Jackass Hill", because only a jackass would farm a hill that steep. Jackass Hill is the steepest non-terraced hillside vineyard in Sonoma County. Lee Sr. is the third generation Martinelli farmer to care-take the original family homestead land; farming the ancient vineyard much as his grandfather Giuseppe had one hundred years before, without irrigation, pesticides, or trellising.

**Growing Year**

The 2015 harvest was the earliest that we have had in a while, starting on August 12th. Even though the previous three years were all very early harvests, 2015 had them all beat. We had a very dry spring with cool weather during bloom (April-May) which caused a long fruit-set period that resulted in some shatter, creating a reduced crop size by 35-50% in some vineyards. The combination of lower yields and early spring bud break meant the ripening period started off early and progressed rapidly. Despite these challenging growing conditions and lower yields, the fruit quality for 2015 was exceptional.

**Production Notes**

Each vineyard block goes through meticulous sample testing and is picked at optimum brix levels to ensure mature, ripe fruit flavors. Once picked, whole berries undergo a long, cool fermentation with wild yeast to generate skin contact and expose fruit character. The wine is pressed off with a touch of residual sugar remaining to complete the fermentation process in barrel until dry. Once dry, the wine goes through malolactic fermentation from wild ML bacteria. After malolactic fermentation the wine is *sur lie* aged in 35% new French oak on for ten months. The wine is neither heat nor cold stabilized, is un-fined and un-filtered, and clarified only by racking before bottling.

Case Production: 59

**Tasting Notes**

The 2015 Jackass Hill Zinfandel has aromas of apricots, violets and black plum. The mouth feel is full and smooth with flavors of stone fruit, cherry and blackberry crumble.

**Historical Acclaim**

2015 Vintage

- 97 points The Wine Advocate
- 94 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous

2014 Vintage

- 96+ points Robert M Parker, Jr., The Wine Advocate
- 95 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous

**Winemaker:** Bryan Kvamme

**Consulting Winemaker:** Erin Green