

Wine Spectator

BY TIM FISH

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A ZESTY ZINFANDEL ON A CHILLY NIGHT



2008 HERITAGE ZINFANDEL *Sonoma County*

One thing I like about living in Sonoma County is the stubbornly independent streak of its vintners. They do what they do, trends be damned, and if you don't like it—tough! Case in point is Dry Creek Vineyard. It helped set the standard for Sonoma Zinfandel and has remained true to the house style over the years while maintaining a modest price point.

The Sonoma County Heritage 2008 is everything I like about the winery's Zins—it's zesty and full of deep plum and black raspberry fruit, finishing with notes of cedar and dill and lively tannins. It packs only 13.5 percent alcohol, well below the current norm.

Winemaker Bill Knuttel blends Dry Creek and Russian River Valley fruit, mostly from bench lands and hillsides. The blend is 82 percent Zin, with 18 percent Petite Sirah to add punch. He ages it for 10 months in a mix of American and French oak barrels. I opened a bottle with pasta in marinara sauce on a recent chilly, rainy night and rated it **88 points, non-blind. Best of all, it's only \$19.**

Dry Creek
VINEYARD