

BUCKLIN

OLD HILL RANCH ZINFANDEL

VINTAGE 2009 • SONOMA VALLEY

VINEYARD ESTABLISHED 1885

ALC. 15.8% BY VOL.

CERTIFIED ORGANIC ANCIENT VINES DRY-FARMED FIELD-BLEND



About Bucklin:

Bucklin was founded in by the four Bucklin Siblings, Arden, Kate, Ted and Will. In addition to farming the historic Old Hill Ranch, the family owns the adjacent Oak Hill Farm where they produce and sell over 250 varieties of flowers, fruits and vegetables. In the year 2000 they decided to further complicate their lives by starting a winery. Both the viticulture and winemaking are managed by Will Bucklin the former winemaker for King Estate. Bucklin produces approximately 1,800 cases annually.

footnotes;

1,5. Charles Sullivan, Zinfandel: A History of a Grape and its Wine, 2003

2. Old Hill was replanted in the 1880's due to phylloxera

3. Irving McKee, Historic Sonoma County Winery Wine Growers, 1947

4. George Vierra, Zinfandel, Primitivo, Crljenak Kašteljanski and Black St. Peters, too?, 2005

Old Hill Ranch was established in 1852 and stands today as Sonoma's oldest vineyard^{1, 2}. Old Hill was founded by William McPherson Hill who is known to be the first viticulturist to import non-Mission grapes into Sonoma³. In 1860 Hill was cultivating a grape variety he called Black St. Peters which he later determined to be Zinfandel⁴. It was the 1866 vintage from these vines that produced the worlds first really famous Zinfandel⁵.

Today, with the major exception of the invention of the diesel tractor engine, Old Hill Ranch is farmed much the same as it was during its youth. The vineyard is still dry-farmed, and these thirsty old vines eke out an average yield of 1.5 tons per acre. The field-blend consists of over two dozen grape varieties which are all blended into our Bucklin Old Hill Ranch Zinfandel, and the vineyard has been farmed using organic techniques for over 30 years.

The 2009 bud-break started about one week earlier than average and we sustained light frost damage on the Grenache and Alicante Bouchet on April 4th. The summer was mild except for a weekend heat spell on August 20th. We were very fortunate that the vines held up through the heat and they weren't ready for harvesting until more than a month later. We began harvesting the Zin on September 28th and finished with the Mixed Blacks on October 10th. Given the early bud-break and the late harvest it was one of the longest growing seasons we have seen. The end of the harvest was punctuated by an unusually wet storm in mid-October but thankfully by that time we had finished harvesting all our grapes.

Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Mourvedre, the early ripeners, are picked and fermented separately from the other mixed black varieties - primarily Alicante Bouchet and Grenache among over 30 varieties. The fermentations are relatively cool and long, and pressing occurred after three weeks on the skins. The two lots are then blended at the first racking in March. Aging is done in 60 gal French oak barrels (40% new) for 22 months. We use minimal sulfites and the wine is not filtered or fined.

Old Hill Zin is known for its complexity and the 2009 is no exception. The spice character tends towards black pepper, and cardamom while the fruit component has an impressive array of raspberries, blackberries, and ripe plums. The French oak contributes toast and vanilla aromas while the tannins are very ripe and smooth on the finish.

VINEYARD; Ancient vine block - Old Hill Ranch
VINTAGE; 2009 **HARVEST DATE;** Sept. 28th (Zin) & Oct 10th (MXB) **TONS / ACRE;** 1.9 **BLEND;** Zinfandel, Grenache, Alicante Bouschet, Petite Sirah, & many other varieties. **HARVEST BRIX;** 28.4 **HARVEST TA;** 0.52 **HARVEST PH;** 3.60 **VINIFICATION;** Two fermentations, blending in March, native yeast, 22 months barrel aging in 40% new French Saury oak, no filtration. **BOTTLING DATE;** July 29, 2010 **BOTTLING TA;** 0.58 **BOTTLING PH;** 3.78 **ALCOHOL;** 16.4% **WINEMAKER;** Will Bucklin **CASES PRODUCED;** 514 **SUGGESTED RETAIL;** \$34

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