



**Review Round-Up | January 2007**

### **2005 Buhler Napa Valley**

While we like the fact that this comparatively low-keyed wine is not overly geared to ripeness and thus is one that will drink well with food, it is lesser in fruit stuffing than serious Zin wants to be, and it takes on a touch too much heat as its tentative fruit draws up short at the end.

**85 Points**

### **2003 Burgess Napa Valley**

If a touch slanted to ripeness in its quietly dusty, blackberry-like aromas, this lightly tannic, moderately fruity wine is entirely free of fatness and heat on the palate, and its nicely proportioned mix of fruit and complementary oak spice mark it as Zinfandel that will find comfortable service with food. It steers clear of bluster and bombast, and, while it will keep well for several years, it does not require lengthy aging.

**87 Points**

### **2005 Cline Ancient Vines Contra Costa County**

We have come to expect Zinfandels of muscle and mass from Cline's old Contra Costa vines, but this understated offering is surprisingly mild with simple, fairly straightforward berryish fruit that fades away a bit too quickly to a brief, slightly dry finish. It may do the trick as unceremonious barbecue drink, but it is not a wine for long keeping.

**85 Points**

### **2005 Earthquake Zin Lodi**

This brash and unschooled Zin is very big, very ripe and utterly lacking in polish, but it is long on blackberries, chocolate and briary spice. It is mouthfilling and viscous and too hot by half, but, for all of its many excesses, it does not stray from the varietal path, and its inarguable richness will earn it an enthusiastic thumbs-up from devotees of its no-holds-barred style.

**88 Points**

### **2005 Joel Gott California**

Mr. Gott has produced a string of eminently likeable Zinfandels that, while never long on minemaking bells and whistles, have consistently keyed on open and accessible varietal fruit. Such is again the case with this latest effort, and it delivers a nice note of well-ripened varietal berries without compromising heat or toughness. It will prove an eminently useful near-term partner to barbecued pork dishes and meaty red-sauced pastas.

**87 Points**

### **2005 Sin Zin Alexander Valley**

There is just enough berryish fruit at work in this clean, smoothly textured, reasonably well-made bottling to give proof on the wine's varietal claims, but, its youth notwithstanding, it is short on real brightness and washes out a bit at the finish.

**85 Points**

**2004 Sin Zin Alexander Valley**

With its uncomplicated aromas of ripe blackberries and vanilla its like-minded, yet slightly shallow flavors, this one avoids the pitfalls of extreme ripeness and heat, but it lacks for both concentration and real interest. It is a wholly drinkable but unexciting offering that promises little with age.

**85 Points****2004 Summers Villa Adriana Vineyard Napa Valley**

Once again, Summers has triumphed with a Zinfandel from its estate vineyard. The wine smells of ripe, freshly crushed berries and picks up just a touch of chocolaty richness along the way. It is full and supple on the palate and has more viscosity than one might expect based on its stated alcohol of 14.2%. Generously flavored and long and rich as it finishes, this is Zin for those who like them thick and tasty.

**92 Points****2005 Temptation California**

Clean, simple, somewhat frontal aromas featuring youthfully bright but limited depth fruit comes tinged with a hint of brush, and these mostly positive, not wholly convincing traits follow in the slightly dry, reedy flavors and mild aftertaste without change of direction.

**85 Points****2005 Vasse Felix Adams Road Margaret River**

Vasse Felix is the winery credited with starting the Margaret River expansion of winemaking in Western Australia. It offers a range of price points with this wine being in the middle of the group. It is a clean, brisk, slightly tight wine with somewhat more acidity to its mid-palate and finish than one might expect, but it makes up for its narrowness with reasonable depth of fruit and quite admirable length. Use it with shellfish.

**87 Points**