

### *ZD Wines Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley*

Before producing any measurable quantities of Cabernet Sauvignon, ZD Wines experimented with crafting small lots of this great varietal. These lots represented the flavor components of many growing regions. The quest for locating the grapes that would best reflect ZD's style ended in 1983 — four years after ZD moved to its home in Rutherford, Napa Valley.

This premiere growing area for Cabernet Sauvignon focused the deLeuze family on the varietal. They planted Cabernet on the property's surrounding 3.2 acres of sloping, eastern benchland. At the same time, they sought grapes from low-yielding vineyards producing intensely flavored fruit. Significant to ZD's style of Cabernet is its predominant use of hillside fruit from Napa Valley.

### *The Production of ZD Cabernet Sauvignon*

The winemaking technique used to produce ZD Cabernet Sauvignon begins in the vineyard with specific selection of fruit grown in recognized viticultural areas within Napa Valley. The fruit comes from low-yielding vineyards that are mostly hillside. It is hand harvested when it reaches full maturity with intense flavor. Although mountain vineyards tend to yield the character consistent with ZD's style of Cabernet Sauvignon, several vineyards from the valley floor yield wonderful fruit as well.

The harvest of ZD Cabernet Sauvignon generally begins in early October. After picking, the grapes are transported to the winery where they are de-stemmed and crushed. Fermentation takes place in open-top stainless steel tanks. The cap is gently punched down every eight hours to maximize flavor extraction and minimize extraction of harsh tannins. The fermenting juice is tasted frequently to determine the precise moment in which the skins and seeds are removed. This is done to prevent overly tannic wine. Fermentation lasts between 6 and 14 days, depending on the level of extraction. The vineyard lots are kept separate during fermentation, then put into 50-60 gallon oak barrels for aging over a 24-month period.

Throughout the two years the wines are aging, the winemaking team is focused on producing a consistent style of wine from all of the individual vineyards. Each wine invariably shows subtle differences. Ultimately, these differences complement one another as they are blended, adding layers of complexity to the final wine.

After blending is complete, the final wine is put back into the barrels where the individual aromatics and flavors are allowed to marry. ZD Cabernet Sauvignon is consistently a rich, flavorful wine that is well balanced. It demonstrates the full spectrum of varietal character.