



## Howell Mountain Vineyards 2003 Black Sears Zinfandel

At the very top of Howell Mountain, 2400 feet above the Napa Valley, lies the Black Sears Vineyard. It is one of the highest vineyard sites in Napa, and has over time produced some of Howell Mountain's most distinctive wines. Here the vines are head pruned, and farmed according to bio-dynamic methods. These farming techniques are an effort to infuse the unique terroir of this site into the quality of the fruit.

At the winery, the grapes are handled gently, carefully sorted, destemmed but not crushed, cold soaked and then fermented in small temperature controlled tanks. The free run must is then gravity fed to the cellar where it is aged in 60 gallon French oak barrels for fifteen months. After a second racking, barrel selection determines the final lots that will be labeled as Black Sears Zinfandel.

Traditionally exotic in character, this years Black Sears Zinfandel retains that trait. Currents, cherry and blackberry all form the base of the wine then are framed by cinnamon, cardamom, white pepper, and mace. All of this fruit and spice slowly evolve on the palate to a rich mocha finish that lingers impressively. Elegant, concentrated, deeply layered and exceedingly interesting to drink. This is a thinking man's zinfandel.

### TECHNICAL NOTES

Alcohol: 16%  
Composition: 100% Zinfandel  
Fruit Source: Black Sears Vineyard  
Total Acidity:  
pH:  
Production: 235 cases