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## 2016 BLACK CHICKEN NAPA VALLEY ZINFANDEL

Sourced from the same family vineyard that Aldo, Nonna, Bob Biale and the Biale family have farmed their whole lives, with additional grapes from our neighboring winery vineyard in the Oak Knoll District, Black Chicken stands as the ultimate expression of Zinfandel from the cool southern Napa Valley, and perhaps the most famous icon of Napa Valley Zinfandel in general.

**Vintage Notes:** The 2016 growing season was near-perfect with an early start and ideal weather conditions throughout. A relatively steady and mild July and August and then a series of warm days at the end of the growing season, vineyards were able to progress to perfect ripeness. The season wrapped up beautifully as the first significant fall rainstorm arrived on October 14th – just after the last of our grapes were picked.

**Harvest Dates:** 9-2-16 to 9-29-16

**Winemaking:** Our winemaking begins in the vineyard with meticulous attention to detail and close monitoring by Bob Biale and winemaker Tres Goetting. The winemaking philosophy is to grow our wines concentrating our efforts all season long in the vineyard so that when the fruit arrives into the cellar, only minimalistic vinification is needed. We want the wines to speak of the soils from which they were grown.

At harvest, the fruit is hand-picked and hand sorted to ensure that only the best fruit makes it into the fermenter. The grapes are then crushed and gravity fed into open top tanks. The must is cold soaked for 2 to 4 days at 50°F. We then inoculate the must with commercial yeast strains. For color and tannin extraction, we do 2 to 3 punch downs per day. Fermentation is usually complete after 14 to 16 days at a maximum temperature of 86°F. At dryness, we lightly press to 100% Burgundy oak barrels of which 20% are new. Malolactic fermentation is completed in the barrels. The wine was aged in barrels for fourteen months.

**Alcohol:** 14.7%

**Winemaker's Tasting Notes:** The Oak Knoll Winegrowing region is prevalent in this wine with its dark color, ripe aromatics and juicy acidity. The nose is full of vibrant black cherries, dried fig, pomegranate, wild black berry, fresh dark flowers, subtle dried herb, toasty brown spices and fruit cake.. The entry is soft and weighty and gives way to supple, round tannins. The lovely finish is the signature of this elegant, surprisingly feminine, and remarkably balanced Zinfandel that is immediately drinkable and worthy of 5 to 7 more years of cellar time.