

— ROBERT —
BIALE
VINEYARDS

2023 BLACK CHICKEN

NAPA VALLEY ZINFANDEL

It all started in the 1940s when 14-year-old Aldo Biale helped his mother make ends meet by selling to insider Napans – along with eggs and produce – some of the family’s homemade Zinfandel. Over the old “party line” phone system, the code words “a Black Chicken” signified a jug of bootleg wine...and kept nosy neighbors and the authorities from finding out about Aldo’s underground Zinfandel operation! Legally produced since 1999, Black Chicken Zinfandel pays homage to the industrious patriarch of the Biale family and the prominence of Zinfandel in the history of the Napa Valley.

The heart of Black Chicken is sourced from vineyards in the Oak Knoll District, among them the same family vineyard Aldo, Nonna, Bob and the Biale family have farmed since the 1930’s. Additional sources come from our estate vineyard surrounding the winery, from neighboring growers in the Oak Knoll, as well as from other long-standing winegrowing families in the Napa Valley. Black Chicken stands as the quintessential expression of Zinfandel from the Napa Valley.

VINTAGE NOTES:

The 2023 season was one of the coolest vintages in more than a decade that, as time progressed, showed all the markings of the spectacular vintage that ended up in the bottle. Several years of drought were erased in a single season as rains began just after the completion of the 2022 harvest and continued through the spring of 2023. Ample ground water and cool temperatures delayed budbreak until April with flowering in mid-May. Moderate temperatures through the spring and summer allowed for balanced maturation across all vineyards - allowing us to pick at the perfect intersections of flavor, sugar, acid, and tannin maturity. Harvesting at Robert Biale began with earlier sites in September while moderate heat at the start of October accelerated picking that lasted through the end of the month.

WINEMAKER’S TASTING NOTES

Showing the influence of the breezy and fog-laced Oak Knoll District, the wine offers rich, plush fruit, delicate acidity and a structure defined by well-ripened, fine-grained tannins. Vibrant aromas of black cherry, dried herbs, and sandalwood on the nose. Expansive on the palate with notes of blackberry, orange peel, plum, and baking spices all driven to a long finish by balanced acidity.



Harvest Sept. 15th to Oct. 20th

Aging 15 months
French oak;
30% new

pH 3.64

TA 5.2 g/L

Alcohol 14.7%