

Mauritson Wines / Rockpile

Located in Sonoma County, the Mauritson family has six generations of farming coursing through their veins and 230 acres of vineyards throughout Dry Creek and Alexander Valley. Down from 4,000 acres in the early 1960's, the Mauritson family has been growing grapes in Dry Creek since 1868. In 1884, it was their great-great-grandfather, S.P. Hallengren who first planted grapes in the Rockpile Region. And when the Army Corps of Engineers coveted the land for the constructing of Lake Sonoma, the family's then remaining 700 acres that sat atop the ridge were left to wild coyotes, sheep and pigs. Nearly 40 years later, in 2000, brothers Thomas and Chris Mauritson reestablished their roots atop Rockpile by planting vineyards.

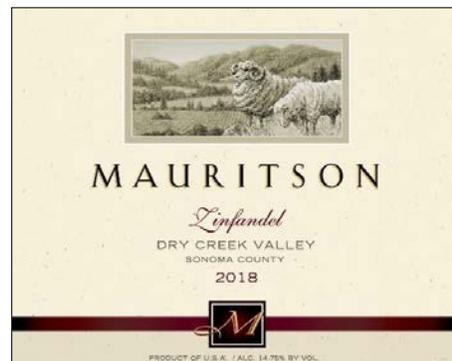


Established as an American Viticultural Area in 2002, Rockpile sits 800+ feet above sea level, on land that's difficult to farm—rocky, rugged and steep. The Healdsburg–Rogers Creek Fault runs through the AVA, providing the family with 17 different soil types, that when combined with the cool coastal breezes from the Pacific Ocean, which sits 13 miles to the west, creates ideal yet varied growing conditions for their Zinfandel, Syrah and Petite Sirah vines— limited yields, excellent drainage, and exposure to wind and sun.

Just as it took a few years' hiatus for the family to return to grape growing on Rockpile's ridge, it took a similar absence for winemaker/owner Clay Mauritson to return to the vineyard. The familiarity gained tending grapes as a teen primed Clay for his return to the region following a football injury at the University of Oregon. After a few years at Kenwood Vineyards, Clay honed his winemaking skills at Taft Street Vineyards and Dry Creek Vineyards, before bottling his first vintage in 1998 at Mauritson. In 2002, he committed his efforts full-time to making wine at his family's vineyards; and last year, he and his team individually fermented 68 vineyard lots before blending and bottling.

Zinfandel

Dry Creek Valley



Varietal/Blend: 94% Zinfandel / 6% Petite Sirah

Farming Practices: sustainable

Vineyard: Estate – Block 5, Rockpile Ridge,
Madrone Spring // Growers – Faloni Ranch,
Buchignani/Garcia, Treborce, and Montecillo

Elevation / Exposure: varied

Soil: varied

Harvest Technique: by hand

Yeast: ambient

Fermentation: spontaneous fermentation

Malolactic: yes

Maturation: 14 months 100% French Oak

Alcohol: 14.75%

Fined: no

Filtered: yes

Country: United States

Region: California

Subregion: Dry Creek Valley

Production #s: 1,804 cases

Dry Creek Zinfandel has a nose of black cherry, molasses dripped over coffee cake crumbs and intriguing dried-herb and earth tones. Fruit is prominent on the palate, then surrenders to lingering savory and mineral notes.

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