



Optima Wine Cellars - 2005 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel

September 11, 2009

The Facts:

The 2005 Optima Wine Cellars Unfiltered Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel is a blend of 90% Zinfandel and 10% Petite Sirah. It was aged for 12 months in a combination of French and American oak. There were a total of 900 cases produced. The suggested retail price is \$25.00.

Dave's Take:

As much as I have loved Dry Creek Valley and as often as I have gone over the past 15 years, there are still many wineries that are new to me. We all have the tendency to want to repeat great experiences so I found myself traveling to Dry Creek and splitting my time between wineries I was familiar with and seeking out a few new ones. Also, as with most businesses, some seem to come and go all too quickly. Today I am drinking a wine from a "new to me" winery called Optima Wine Cellars. The Optima label was established in 1984 after winemaker / proprietor Mike Duffy purchased some grapes and released just 400 cases. So now, 25 years later, Optima has grown into a family run winery producing over 4,000 cases. By the way, check out their website. Read how the love story unfolded between Mike and Nicol ... if Nora Ephron doesn't come knocking to make her next chick flick about these two there is something seriously wrong.

The first thing I notice when I crack this bottle is that the berry fruit aromas practically assault you from the glass. Blackberries, blueberries, cherries were all there. This initially led me to believe that it was going to be a "brighter" wine, but I was pleasantly surprised that the earthiness, spice, and wood shone through the berry fruit, raisins and vanilla on the palate. This bottle was serenading me as these waves of chocolate, earth, cinnamon, and nutmeg washed over my taste buds for a brilliant finish. Although this wine is highly drinkable now - no doubt in part to the French Oak. I couldn't help but let this bottle continue to open up for three days and go back to it over and over. Truthfully it got better over two days which attests to its age ability. Certainly this bottle would pair well with the typical BBQ fare, but this bottling is truly special. I would tend to drink this on its own or with something simpler such as pork chops with cranberries. This would allow this fantastic wine to be the center of attention which it deserves to be.

So there are two lessons with this selection; 1) don't succumb to the temptations of familiar wineries when you get an opportunity to visit this magical appellation 2) build yourself a wine cellar, opportunities like this pop up now and then and you might want to store a couple of cases