

2010 Sandler Buck Hill Vineyard Zinfandel

Harvest date: October 22, 2010

Alcohol: 15.1%

pH: 3.82

TA: 4.9 g/L

Barrel aging: 18 months in 28% new and 72% 3 year old French oak

Bottling date: May 5, 2012

Cases produced: 170

Release price \$25

2010 was an incredibly cold summer in coastal California, and well into August, it looked like the Zinfandel at Buck Hill Vineyard had less than a snowball's chance in Death Valley of ripening before the end of the year. All of a sudden, mother nature turned up the thermostat and we had two decent heat waves in late August and early September. This saved the vintage for almost all the grapes in the cooler California appellations, but especially for later ripening varieties like Zinfandel.

This was the first Buck Hill Zin for which Sandler had enough quantity to warrant a tank fermentation. Fermenting in a 5 ton stainless steel tank vs. a 1 ton plastic fermenter allows the must to maintain higher fermentation temperatures and gain more extraction from the skins. As deep as the wine is in fruit, it was also very high in acidity. So we let the wine sit in barrel, on its lees, for 18 months to let the acidity soften.

The 2010 Sandler Buck Hill Zinfandel starts with a pretty nose of blackberries and some barrel spice. The palate is expansive with lush Zinfandel, berry and cola flavors. The finish is bone dry but the taste of the fruit and balanced acidity lasts for quite a while. Enjoy this from late 2012 through 2015.

