



## 2007 Robert Craig Howell Mountain • Napa Valley Zinfandel

*Total Production:* Only 800 cases

### Winemaker Notes

Our 2007 vintage from neighboring Black Sears Vineyard demonstrates why Howell Mountain Zinfandels are in such demand. This is a serious Zinfandel-lovers wine, possessing great depth of flavors, balance and structure. Concentrated, long-lived essence of black raspberry and signature Howell Mountain pepper are at the forefront, backed by fine tannins.

### Vineyard Characteristics

Just up the road from our winery is the Black Sears Estate, where Joyce Black Sears and Jerre Sears have been nurturing Zinfandel grapes of great renown for over 25 years. Their vineyard tops out at 2400 feet, making this the highest vineyard on the mountain. Biodynamically farmed, the vineyard's volcanic soils and east-facing site offer perfect conditions for growing Zinfandel. The well-drained, rocky soils cause vines to struggle for existence. This stress produces small, intensely flavored berries that are ideal building blocks for Zinfandel and Cabernet. Zinfandel grapes also love warm weather, but too much heat can translate into low-acid, high-alcohol wines. Howell Mountain has the right combination of moderate days and warm summer nights to produce fruit with balanced acidity and sugar.

### Tasting Notes

*Aroma:* Howell Mountain's wild reaches come through in concentrated black raspberry fruit, mountain lilac, ground white/black pepper, and a touch of anisette and rose petals. *Flavors:* Gorgeous wild berry fruit flows from the opening aromatics, finding great depth in the mid-palate and enlivened by pepper, warm spices and a volcanic minerality. *Finish:* Supple tannins and luscious fruit come together in a strong, lingering finish. *General:* A layered, stylish, multi-dimensional example of Howell Mountain at its best, made with finesse. Decanting recommended. *Cuisine:* BBQ salmon with roasted potatoes; pan-seared trout; grilled rib-eye; short ribs simmered in Zinfandel sauce.

### Wine Information

*Harvest date:* October 9

*Average sugar:* 25.3° Brix

*TA:* .61

*pH:* 3.91

*Alcohol:* 14.9%

*Barrel Aging:* 16 months in 30% new French oak; 20% new American oak; 20% new Hungarian oak; 30% second-year French oak.

*Bottling Date:* April 2009

*Price:* California suggested retail price is \$50.00 per bottle.

*Release date:* August 2009