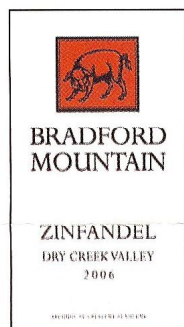


touches on bitter cherry, cranberry and bright boysenberry. Then tannins take it into an earthier mode, darkening the fruit to purple and black iron edges. All the while it retains some laciness, with light infiltrating the darker reaches of the wine. Check on this ten years from the vintage, to serve with grilled quail. (540 cases) *D-Cubed Cellars, St. Helena, CA*

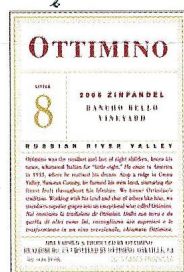


93 | Bradford Mountain \$28
2006 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel This blends fruit from Goat Trek Vineyard and the higher elevations at Grist Vineyard on Bradford Mountain, a combination that creates a bright, sunny zin with red fruit and spice. The fresh flavors have a lively red apple and cherry character; the tannins have a red fruit-skin flavor, along with a blast of earthiness. It's delicious and ready to decant for any spicy sausages, whether turkey or morcilla. (1,900 cases) *Bradford Mountain Winery, Healdsburg, CA*

93 | Dashe \$32
2007 Alexander Valley Old Vines Todd Brothers Ranch Zinfandel Mike Dashe usually harvests the old vines at this Geyserville vineyard first—in 2007, that was early September. He doesn't inoculate the must and uses older French oak to mature the wine. The result is a zin with freshness and lovely textural grace. The fruit runs from transparent cherry skin to ripe peach and earthier notes of sweet carrots pulled directly out of the garden. As bright and juicy as the wine may be, the tannins are potent and need age to mellow. For the cellar, and eventually, brisket. (470 cases) *Dashe Cellars, Oakland, CA*

92 | Acorn \$30
2006 Russian River Valley Heritage Vines Alegria Vineyards Zinfandel This juicy, black zin has espresso richness in its tannin, along with a sense of crushed stone. The fruit is bold and firm, with a forest mushroom backnote; the structure is cleanly drawn and built for cellaring. (W&S, 4/09) *Acorn Winery, Healdsburg, CA*

92 | D-Cubed \$32
2006 St. Helena Napa Valley Zinfandel Based on fruit from Korte Ranch, a dry-farmed, head-pruned vineyard planted in 1910, this blend includes a small contribution from Chiles Valley as well. It's significantly warmer and sweeter than D-Cubed's Howell Mountain Zin (recommended above), a smoother, more thickly textured valley floor expression that melds the cinnamon of oak with the red scents of its fruit. The beauty lies in its aroma, where the vibrant fruit carries a hint of green that adds freshness. (252 cases) *D-Cubed Cellars, St. Helena, CA*

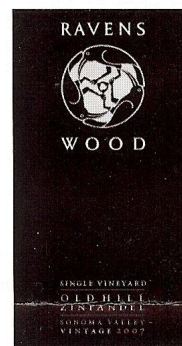


92 | Ottimino \$26
2006 Russian River Valley Rancho Bello Vineyard Zinfandel (Best Buy) Rancho Bello is a dry-farmed vineyard on a ridge above Green Valley, a warm spot that matures zin into a juicy textural pleasure. This wine has the cool touch of satin and silk, a weave of pine, strawberry, sweet William and resinous herb. Tannins darken and firm it up, but the fruit keeps pouring out from behind them. Decant this to let the aromas build, then serve it with grilled rack of lamb. (1,089 cases) *Ottimino, Occidental, CA*

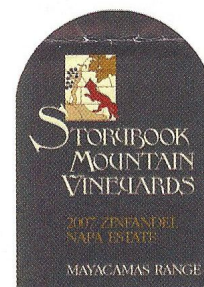
92 | Peter Franus \$35
2007 Mount Veeder Napa Valley Brandlin Vineyard Zinfandel This bold red grows at 1,200 feet, on dry-farmed, head-pruned vines planted in the 1920s. The eastern exposure helps keep the fruit fresh as it matures on the vine, a combination of zinfandel (92 percent) with charbono, mourvèdre and carignane. In 2007, the wine's intensity and power is balanced by its freshness and fierce mountain tannin. The red fruit is just as fierce, a type of strawberry and raspberry that doesn't grow on the valley floor. It's long and kinetic, accessible now, but built to age. (900 cases) *Peter Franus Wine Company, Napa, CA*

92 | Ravenswood \$35
2006 Alexander Valley Big River Zinfandel From vines planted in the 1890s on benchlands between the Alexander and Russian River valleys, Big River produced a fat

zin in 2006. The stalwart structure allows it to expand into a juicy middle, where the deep mineral tannins are saturated by the floral black fruit before they tighten up around it. Decant a bottle for roast lamb. (1,655 cases; W&S, 4/09) *Ravenswood, Sonoma, CA*



92 | Ravenswood \$60
2007 Sonoma Valley Old Hill Vineyard Zinfandel Joel Peterson made his first Old Hill Zin in 1983, from a site originally planted by William McPherson Hill in the 1860s, then replanted on St. George rootstock in 1892. He shares the vineyard's fruit with the current owner, Will Bucklin, who has identified and mapped out the location of each individual vine of zinfandel (about 75 percent of the planting), grenache, alicante, petite sirah, carignane and others. The 2007 vintage is intensely floral, with scents of jasmine, flowering herbs and sassafras. The fruit has a dark, pomegranate tone, the tannins a dynamic earthiness, like the scent of a just-tilled field. It's a big wine, balanced enough to handle all its alcohol, which adds to the complexity around the edges. (1,180 cases) *Ravenswood, Sonoma, CA*



92 | Storybook Mountain \$34
2007 Napa Valley Mayacamas Range Zinfandel Bright, fresh boysenberry flavors fill this wine with a wild fruit presence. It darkens to black raspberry as it takes on air, with serious structure and length of flavor. But it still has the kind of friendly, summery zin character that will brighten anyone's mood in winter. For roast game. (3,000 cases; W&S, 10/09) *Storybook Mountain Vineyards, Calistoga, CA*