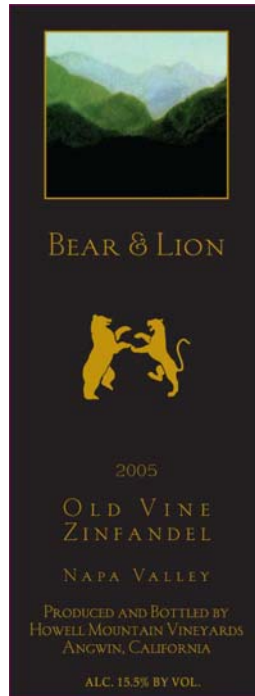




HOWELL MOUNTAIN VINEYARDS



Bear & Lion 2005 Old Vine Napa Valley Zinfandel

This year Howell Mountain Vineyards, in response to consumer demand, sought out mature Zinfandel vineyards in Napa Valley to blend with its Beatty Ranch and Black Sears Vineyard fruit. Renamed Bear & Lion, after the black bear and mountain lion that appear on the label (and sometimes in the vineyards), this Old Vine bottling combines the best characteristics of mountain fruit and grapes from lowland terraces.

The 2005 vintage began with rain, then unusually hot weather in March kicked off the growing season. More rain in May kept the vines healthy and vigorous, delayed bloom and fruit set, and contributed to a large crop. The summer was mild, and by September, foggy mornings led growers and winemakers to squirm about ripening. But several days of temperatures over 90° at the end of the month got the harvest off and running.

The wine itself is a brilliant medium ruby. Ripe, meaty and dark, it is the most intense Old Vine in years. Scents of cherry, spiced plum and clarified butter are supported by a deeper core of jammy fruit. On the palate, the wine is rich and concentrated, with chocolate and chestnut flavors and a long, smooth textured finish. It's wonderful now, but will continue to gain complexity in the bottle.

Technical Notes

Alcohol:	15.5%
Composition:	100% Zinfandel
Fruit Source:	Black Sears Vineyard Beatty Ranch Vineyard Select Napa Valley Vineyards
Titrateable Acidity:	0.61 g/100 ml
pH:	3.79
Production:	2,500 cases