

## **Accolades**

### **ZAP attracts thousands; Ballentine leads the charge**

excerpted from Napa News.com, Thursday, February 3, 2005

By L. PIERCE CARSON

..."If every winemaker had the resources Bruce Devlin has at present, what with some incredible fruit grown by Van and Betty Ballentine, owners of Ballentine Vineyard -- well, he or she would be sitting pretty.

Within a couple of months, Devlin will be releasing a zinfandel from Block 11 of the Pocaí Vineyard, located south of Calistoga between Highway 29 and the Silverado Trail. This is a special release of a single vineyard zin that's full of black fruit that, for the vintage, is not overly ripe. It's a sensational wine, a mouth full of blackberries and black cherries, and, although it doesn't taste hot, the alcohol is approaching 17 percent. It's a blockbuster and -- here's the nice part -- it'll retail for only \$25 at the winery.

And while you're at Ballentine Vineyards tasting room -- located north of St. Helena across from St. Clement -- pick up the current release, the 2001 Napa Valley zinfandel. Another blockbuster, this one's packed with blackberries and plums, and exudes all that fruit and more in the nose. It's a real bargain at \$18.

If you like that one, you love the 2001 Block 9 Napa Valley zin -- a more intense rendition of the general NV release. This one's \$27 a bottle. If you can wait a couple of months for another Ballentine treat, wait till you taste the satiny smooth blueberry-infused 100 percent zinfandel port Devlin and the Ballentines will release this spring. At \$40, this one will be a special treat for wrapping up a meal with your best friends.

Frankly, I think I'm going to make a special trip myself up to Ballentine to pick up a mixed case of these goodies - or as much as Van and Betty will let me have."