



**Beekeeper
Zinfandel "Secret Stones"
Rockpile, Sonoma County 2014**

Grape: Zinfandel (95% Zinfandel & 5% Petite Sirah)

Vineyard: Madrone Spring Vineyard, Dry Farmed, Sustainably Farmed

Appellation: Rockpile, Sonoma County

Vintage: 2014 - Bottled December 16, 2015.

Winemaker: Clay Mauritson, Emma Kudritzki & Ian Blackburn

Alcohol: 14.9% **PH:** 3.74 **TA:** 6.300 (g/1000 m)

Aged: 15 months in 100% French Oak (30% new)

Production: (1,848 Bottles) 154 Cases

Price: \$65



Product Info & Orders
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About

About the Vintage: The 2014 vintage was an upside surprise following two of the most prolific vintages in California harvest history with the enormous 2012 and hyper concentrated 2013. One could only expect that the draught and run of great vintages would throw us a curveball in 2014... we were very thankful for simplicity of the amazing 2014 vintage. It was one of the prettiest vintages in history, the sorting team had little work to do with uniform ripeness, slightly lower yields, small berry size and the nice pace of the harvest. It was and the Wine Spectator has already coined the 2014 vintage as the "GOAT" - Greatest of All-Time.... We of course are not in a position to make that declaration but we may have made our most definitive wines. The purity of expression, the elegance, the long-aging nature of the fruit (great acid, and balance) the freshness - all in one vintage, was hard to expect and certainly a welcome result for our young brand.

In 2014, we made a decision to change the name of our Rockpile wine from Madrone Spring (denoted on the back label now) to Secret Stones. Now in our 6th vintage "Madrone Spring" was not "sticking" in the hearts and minds of our clients and our Madrone has no relation to the plethora of other Madrone references in the wine world and it wasn't getting the attention or respect it deserved. Many producers are crafting Rockpile wines, but single hillsides? Single vineyards? Madrone Spring is about a hectare (2.3 acres) with a special exposition; it is California Certified Sustainable and Dry Farmed. The name "Madrone Spring" was often being left off of wine lists and left off of consumers emails; so I wanted to give the wine a name that could help separate itself going forward... "Secret Stones" are the source of our Rockpile character and I hope the name will serve this wine well.

Winemaker Tasting Notes: The purity and finesse of this exceptional vintage dictated the style of this bottling. One of our purest and "claret like" efforts; rich crunchy red cherry and plum, cracked black pepper, cedar, gravel, stone, and a kiss of creme brulee. Signature spice and dried underbrush, with tender yet balanced tannins. The elevated acidity from this hillside ensures this wine will age gracefully for a decade or more. 100% french oak, 25% new provides lovely nuance in the nose and mouthfeel. Drink late 2017 - 2027.

Awards

94+ Points - Review by Robert M. Parker, Jr. - eRobertParker.com

Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2014 Zinfandel Secret Stones has a youthfully closed, rather broody nose to begin, offering glimpses of blueberry preserves, baked black berries and prunes over Christmas cake and chocolate box hints. Big, rich and full-bodied in the mouth, it really packs in the berry preserves and spice flavor layers, with a solid structure of velvety tannins and seamless acidity, finishing very long.

96 Points - Review by Doug Wilder - Purely Domestic Wine Report

"An intense, saturated nose of fresh, sticky blackberry, cherry, and baking spices showing rich density, notes of juniper. The palate is gorgeous on entry with gobs of silky, sweet black currant, spicy fig and prune plums. Supple throughout, showing good acid backbone with lingering golden stone fruits on finish. Hits all the pleasure buttons. Drink 2016-2024."

95 points - 3 Puffs Connoisseurs Guide: 🌸🌸🌸

Our very high regard for Beekeeperwines seems to keep getting higher with each new release, and this Secret Stones version confirms the winery's place as one of the very best Zinfandel makers in the business. It is explosively fruity and yet genuinely complex with layered aromas and flavors of perfectly ripe berries, minerals and a wholly complementary splash of sweet oak, and its combination of concentration and structural strength is a sure guarantor of amazing longevity. We see it growing with grace for no less than a decade, and it will be still going strong after two.

95 Points - Steve Heimoff:

This is a big Zin, but of course, it's Rockpile, a warm-to-hot, rocky mountain AVA in the aridly inland northwest of Dry Creek Valley, where the grapes get super-ripe and concentrated under the sere summer sun. That concentration seems to have been even greater in this drought year. "Secret Stones" is the old Madrone Spring Vineyard; the owners changed the name to avoid confusion with other wineries and vineyards that have the word "Madrone." Whatever, this wonderful Zin is easily on a par with the 2013 Madrone Spring. It is dark, aromatic and immensely complex, with a Hulkian mouthfeel. The aroma is explosive in blackcurrants, blackberries, ripe purple plums, blueberry preserves, and black licorice, sprinkled with dark chocolate shavings, freshly-crushed black pepper and a squeeze of anisette. There's a welcome, tart bite of green at the end to remind you of the plant kingdom. Does that sound good? It is. The flavors sink into the mouth and last for a long time into a spicy, dry finish. Rockpile's famous tannins are powerful, but smooth and silky. I would drink this wine now; on the second night after opening, the alcohol was showing through, not a good sign for aging. The details: about 30% new French oak, alcohol 14.9%, and very good acidity for balance. A fun, heady, elegant Zin that surely is at the top of its class. What would I drink it with? Braised short ribs, but any beef or bird with the smoke of barbecue will be fine.