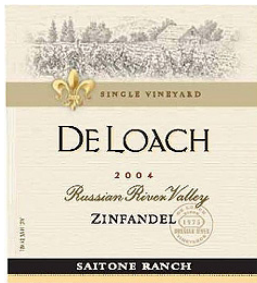




Wine Recommendations



DeLoach Vineyards 2004 Zinfandel, *Saitone Ranch* (Russian River Valley)

When Cecil De Loach and his family decided to sell the winery bearing their name to Boisset USA, the well-regarded Russian River Valley winery's future was cloudy.

That's because some of the estate's fruit was part of the sale, but another significant part stayed with the De Loach family, which developed the brand Hook and Ladder. Moreover, the new wine maker for De Loach wasn't named immediately, and some believed that the brand would never be the same.

After all, said the purists, this is a cool-climate-image winery with real cool-climate vineyards, and who could possibly pay homage to the winery's tradition if they weren't steeped in a cool-climate culture?

But the new owners of De Loach discovered one of the state's most creative and talented wine makers in Greg La Follette, who previously worked at Kendall-Jackson as an in-hour troubleshooter/consultant.

It was La Follette who absorbed the latest wine making techniques from around the world and tested them with California fruit.

Later he became wine maker for Flowers Vineyard & Winery, where he crafted some of the state's most dramatic Pinot Noirs and also helped design Flowers' gravity-flow winery.

Despite the loss of some precious Zinfandel vineyards in the sale, De Loach still had resources and this wine (as well as De Loach's "Forgotten Vines" Zin bottling, \$30) reflects the spicy, violet/raspberry fruit of the region and captures the essence of cooler-climate Zin flavors.

Reviewed December 5, 2006 by [Dan Berger](#).