

Hanzell Vineyards



IN 1948, AMBASSADOR JAMES D. ZELLERBACH ACQUIRED 200 ACRES IN THE Mayacamas Mountains in California's Sonoma region, with the goal to create a small vineyard and winery focused on producing top quality Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Just five years later, the Zellerbachs planted six acres and, in 1957, created the first vintage. They named their winery Hanzell (www.hanzell.com), a contraction of the name of the Ambassador's wife, Hana Zellerbach. It was acquired by the de Brye family in 1975.

Hanzell Vineyards has maintained the oldest continuously producing Chardonnay and Pinot Noir vines in the New World, and was the first to create and use custom-designed stainless steel temperature controlled fermentation tanks; use inert gas (nitrogen) to prevent oxidation; isolate and cultivate the bacterium that causes malolactic fermentation; and use imported Sirugue French oak barrels exclusively for barrel-aging wine. Hanzell Vineyards has had only three winemakers in over 50 years and the original six-acre vineyard has grown to 46 acres today, allowing Hanzell to produce 6,000 cases annually: three-quarters Chardonnay and one-quarter Pinot Noir.

Hanzell's exclusive current release list includes the 2007 Hanzell Ambassador's 1953 Vineyard Pinot Noir, which boasts initial aromas of warm spiced cherries, dried cranberry, tobacco leaf, orange peel, and the stoniness of potter's clay, as well as notes of cola, toasted grain, and a brambly/dry brush quality.

The 2008 Sebella Chardonnay, named after the owner's children, offers broad and forward



initial aromas of pear, nectarine, honeysuckle, and wet stone, which evolve to clove, vanilla, and tropical notes of guava and pineapple. Flavors of lemon curd, mineral, and vanilla unfold into a long, dry, and crisp finish.

Hanzell Vineyards' recent accolades include making *Wine & Spirits*' "The 7 Best New Sommeliers of 2010" list, *Food & Wine*'s "Best American Wines over \$20" list with their 2007 Hanzell Vineyards Chardonnay, as well as receiving a 91 point score on *O's* June 2010 list with their Hanzell Vineyards Chardonnay Sonoma Valley 2007.

The Hanzell wine library is accessible with Ambassador's Circle membership and boasts five decades of vintages, as well as allocation and direct shipment of each of the vineyard's wines upon release; a holiday magnum offering, shipped in a fire-branded wooden box; and complimentary estate visits for members and their guests. ●



Heritage Winery (upper left); Hanzell Pinot Noir (center); Ambassador Chardonnay grapes (lower left)