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Rhoda Stewart's *A Zinfandel Odyssey* Offers Lyrical and "Zinformative" Tour Through "World's Most Captivating Grape"

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A definitive tour through the magic and mystery of Zinfandel awaits readers of the newly released *A Zinfandel Odyssey*, by Napa Valley professor and wine writer Rhoda Stewart.

At 460 pages, Stewart's alternately poetic and "Zinformative" study of what she fondly calls "the world's most captivating grape" includes in-depth interviews with more than 100 Zinfandel growers and producers throughout California and even into Baja.

Like the finest aged vintages whose characteristics, growing conditions and winemaker's decisions Stewart describes in telling detail, *A Zinfandel Odyssey* was 14 years in the making. Stewart structures the book into sections showcasing each Zinfandel growing area. Her love for Zinfandel grapes and the wines made from them is revealed not only in her lyrical prose, but also in many photographs she took over the years of the growers, winemakers, vineyards and grapes that give Zinfandel its unique place in viticultural history.

That history is underscored early in the book with a long interview of world-renowned plant geneticist Dr. Carole Meredith of UC Davis, who discusses both the scientific research and historical conjecture on the mystery-shrouded origins of the Zinfandel grape.

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A Zinfandel Odyssey includes poignant evocations of Zinfandel's elder statesmen, who continued to tend century-old vines that were at one time considered second-rate and even "junk," but are now the source of marvelously complex (and sought-after) wines. Stewart dedicates the book in part to several of these now deceased figures, including Louis Martini, Louis Pagani, Valle Rossi, and George Zeni.

A Zinfandel Odyssey also features revealing, inevitably philosophical interviews with many other established Zinfandel producers. They include Leon Sobon and Cary Gott, who helped put Amador County wines on the Zinfandel map; Joel Peterson of Ravenswood Cellars and Michael Collins of Limerick Lane in Sonoma County; Paul Draper, whose Ridge Vineyards label has adorned award-winning Zinfandels from the Central Coast, Napa and Sonoma; Kent Rosenblum, the veterinarian-turned-winemaker from Rosenblum Vineyards on San Francisco Bay; Jed Steele (Steele Vineyards) and Dan Dooling (Mariah Vineyards) of the coastal mountain-cooled Zins in Mendocino County; and Lore Olds of Sky Vineyards, with his elevation-influenced Zins from the foothills of Napa. Scores of other equally intriguing figures are also given their due.

Elegantly designed and published by *Practical Winery & Vineyard*, a leading wine industry trade journal in San Rafael, *A Zinfandel Odyssey* is available via mail, fax or phone order from: PWV, 58-D Paul Drive, San Rafael CA, 94903. Phone 415-479-5819, fax 415-492-9325 . Cost is \$60, with applicable sales tax and a \$4.50 shipping charge applied to all orders.

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