

**Cline Cellars****2003 Oakley Five Reds
(California)**

Twenty years ago Fred Cline helped to begin the “Rhone Ranger” movement by bucking the trend for Cabernet and Chardonnay, focusing instead on hearty old vine Zinfandel, Mourvedre, Syrah and Petite Sirah amongst others. Today Cline Cellars is known throughout the wine world as a leading producer of Rhone varietals as well as Zinfandel, and is on my radar for creating the benchmark Old Vine line including [Mourvedre](#), Small Berry Mourvedre, [Zinfandel](#) and [Carignan](#) from century old vines in the white sandy vineyards of Oakley in Contra Costa County.

Cline performs beautifully as well in the under \$10 category, with its California appellation line including a luscious Syrah, brambly Zin, and now this blend of five reds (list is \$11 but it is more often found around \$8.99). It is a blend of 41% Syrah, 27% Zinfandel, 22% Petite Sirah, 10% Alicante Bouschet, and 1% Mourvedre. Because the Syrah comes from both Sonoma and the Central Coast the wine defers to the California appellation. It is very complex and intriguing with notes of strawberry jam, cherry pie, vanilla bean ice cream, tarragon, and barnyard, or “animale,” and is very lively in texture. Mouthfilling from the get go, it then lightens and ends up with a mouthpuckering funkiness that is just screaming for another bite of a hearty winter dish.

Reviewed January 14, 2007 by [Catherine Fallis](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Cline Cellars](#)

Vintage: 2003

Wine: Oakley Five Reds

Appellation: [California](#)

Grapes: [Syrah / Shiraz](#) (41%), [Zinfandel](#) (27%), [Petite Sirah](#) (22%), [Alicante Bouschet](#) (10%), [Mourvedre / Mataro](#) (1%)

Price: \$11.00

THE REVIEWER**Catherine Fallis**

Founder and President of Planet Grape LLC, a company committed to bringing the joy of wine, food, and good living into the lives of everyday people, Catherine is creator of the “grape goddess guides to good living,” a series of books, television presentations,

seminars, and e-learning programs. The fifth woman in the world to become a Master Sommelier, grape goddess Catherine Fallis is still very much down-to-earth.