

**Joullian Vineyards****2004 Zinfandel - Sias Cuvee, Estate
(Carmel Valley)**

From the beginning, Joullian Vineyards emphasized Bordeaux grape varieties, both red and white. But in 1984 winery co-founder Dick Sias also planted the first Zinfandel vines in Carmel Valley. Later, some acreage originally devoted to Chardonnay was grafted over to Zinfandel, and now the vineyard includes selections from places ranging from Amador County to Lytton Springs to Primitivo from Puglia. A little Petite Sirah and even smaller amounts of Aleatico, Alicante Bouschet, Carignane and Grenache are added to the blend for more complexity. The wine spends 14 months in new and year-old French oak barrels.

While many Zins these days are completely over the top, with high alcohol and noticeable residual sugar, this Joullian Zinfandel, which sells for \$22, is well-balanced and displays good varietal character, with plenty of brambly berry fruit, some nice spice and lesser notes of plum and cherry. The alcohol (14.5 percent) is moderate by Zinfandel standards. The firm tannins cry out for some hearty foods, and the winery suggests pairing it with roasted or grilled meats, barbecued chicken, grilled tuna steaks or spicy Thai or Mexican food. I found it to be a good match with chili.

Reviewed March 21, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Joullian Vineyards](#)

Vineyard: Estate

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Zinfandel - Sias Cuvee

Appellation: [Carmel Valley](#)

Grapes: [Zinfandel](#) (94%), [Petite Sirah](#) (4%), [Aleatico](#), [Alicante Bouschet](#), [Carignane](#), [Grenache](#)

Price: \$22.00

THE REVIEWER**Laurie Daniel**

Laurie Daniel, wine columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News*, has been reviewing wine for more than 10 years. She doesn't use numbers, preferring to describe her recommended wines and let consumers decide for themselves.

Laurie believes that bigger isn't necessarily better; she's partial to wines of balance, finesse and character. Her particular interests are Pinot Noir (versions that really taste like Pinot, that is) and aromatic whites like Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Gewürztraminer.