

**Grey Wolf Cellars****2005 Zinfandel - The Jackal  
(Paso Robles)**

Winemaker Joe Barton likes to make wines with attitude: why not? He's got the best vineyard sources in the perfect locations for growing powerhouse Zin. He also has the best winery name to spearhead a line of wines with attitudinal animal names. This one bears the nickname, "The Jackal," and the label says, in a mysterious way: "A Gift From Our Cousin the Jackal, Origin Unknown. A Mystical Red Wine to be sure." Well, it's most

certainly mystical and a great gift, from the Paso Robles vineyards that bear it, and from a most talented winemaker, Joe Barton, who shepherds (wolf herds?) it into the bottle. Joe gets the fruit from the Westside, mostly from Chanticleer, in the Templeton Gap area, Cushman Vineyard, in the Willow Creek area, as well as the Barton Estate, also in Willow Creek.

To beef it up, Joe adds 15 percent Petite Sirah. He tells me that the Brix was from 27 to 28 percent, and the acidity was lower in pH than most years, with a consistent TA. He's been using mostly Budapest Hungarian and Seguin U-stave American oak. He says, "I think those oak barrels really help to cradle the fruit and stimulate a broader finish." For sure.

If you are hankering for a completely unpretentious, purely made, dusty blackberry-raspberry-crawling-on-the-fences brambly Zin, this is it. Even at 15.5, you won't feel any heat, in the nose or on the palate. It's pretty much the way Zin was meant to be: intoxicating, invigorating, and energizing, all at the same time. This is a high school cheerleader who's just naturally exuberant and is without a clue about her considerable appeal.

Reviewed February 27, 2008 by [Laura Ness](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Grey Wolf Cellars](#)

**Vintage:** 2005

**Wine:** Zinfandel - The Jackal

**Appellation:** [Paso Robles](#)

**Grapes:** Zinfandel (85%), [Petite Sirah](#) (15%)

**Price:** \$30.00

**THE REVIEWER****Laura Ness**

A wine writer and wine judge for major publications and competitions around the country, Laura Ness likens wine to the experience of music. She is always looking for that ubiquitous marriage of rhythm, melody, and flawless

execution. What is good music? You know it when you get lost in it. What is good wine? It is music in your mouth.