

95

100 Best Wines
of the Year

Wine & Spirits

Ousterhout

2011 Alexander Valley Nance's Vineyard Zinfandel The vines that grew this supremely elegant wine were planted in 1999 on the red volcanic loam of a hillside and benchland vineyard in the southeast corner of Alexander Valley. Douglas and Nancy Ousterhout purchased the vineyard in 2009 and hired a pinot noir winemaker, Micah Wirth of Joseph Jewel, to create this silky, delicate zin. It's as bright as a red cherry fresh off the tree, feeling almost weightless on the palate. As the wine takes on air, the tannins provide an edgy minerality that focuses and amplifies the fruit into a sunny, ruby-red laser beam. Beautiful now, this has the kind of effortless balance that will benefit from cellaring.