

STOLPMAN VINEYARDS

BALLARD CANYON

ROUSSANNE 2016

TECH

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

Block 3 Roussanne w/a portion of Block 4 & 7
(older vines)

VARIETAL BLEND

88% Roussanne, 12% Chardonnay

FINAL ANALYSIS

alcohol: 12%

VINIFICATION

crushed (de-stemmed) and then gently
pressed into 500L Oak Puncheons

VATTING/FERMENTATION

Native Fermentation in 500L French Oak
Puncheons, 80% new, 20% 2nd or 3rd use
(equivalent of 36% new oak in terms for
typical (smaller) barrique

ELEVAGE

Aged 9 months in oak Puncheon during
which malolactic fermentation naturally
occurs. Racked into bottling tank and lees
stirred immediately prior to bottling for
cloudy appearance

RELEASE DATE

October 2017

HARVEST DATE

October 12-27 2016

TOTAL PRODUCTION

1450 cases

NOTES

BACKGROUND

With 18 acres of Roussanne, Stolpman Vineyards accounts for over 5% of planted acreage of the grape in California. The notoriously late-ripening, sluggish varietal is perfectly suited to our Ballard Canyon site:

Low humidity and high afternoon winds blowing off the Pacific combine to prevent fungal issues that plague the grape in Europe and other wetter regions.

Intense, late season, Southern Latitude Sun: the Roussanne tans to its beautiful namesake "Rousse" - or rust color. Our experienced crew, La Cuadrilla, hand plucks every leaf away from the fruit through the early summer and then rotates each cluster once one side turns golden - usually in early September. Only evenly tanned fruit is then visually selected during multiple hand-harvesting passes.

VINTAGE

Great wines are often made when the vines are on the verge of ripening their fruit but almost don't make it. That fierce struggle imparts vibrant character in the finished wines.

In the 5th year of drought, the Roussanne vines were depleted and struggled to grow a conservative canopy. Sugars accumulated at a snail's pace and we fretted that the leaves were drying out and beginning to yellow.

We picked at lower sugars than usual, ending up with a wine of only 12% alcohol.

AT THE WINERY

We knew the Roussanne coming in at slightly lower sugar would create a lighter, more delicate wine than in years past. Because of this, we pulled back the use of new French Puncheons by 20% - as we didn't want the oak to overpower the wine's character.

Once through malolactic fermentation we fell in love with the wines character and made the unprecedented decision to bottle the wine prior to the 2017 vintage, after only 9 months in oak. We aimed to capture the fresh, bright nuance of the wine rather than wait for the richer layers to unfurl as usual.

Winemaker Kyle Knapp had one more trick up his sleeve: He vigorously stirred the lees in the tank just before bottling to give the Roussanne a cloudy appearance. The lees give the wine a seductive creamy texture and a rounded, fleshy dimension.

SENSORY

A combination of Neon Yellow and Peachy Cream in appearance, please decant this wine to show it off, or at the very least, hold your glass up to the light. Singularly unique in appearance - DO NOT fear the cloudiness, it is intentional - No Refunds!

Tangerine orange blossom, honey and a continuum of lemon sing all the way through the palate. The toasty oak framework lies underneath the fruit profile, lifting and supporting it. The creamy, zesty texture goes on forever, well beyond a typical white wine finish. Secondary notes of Jasmine, tropical guava, green apple, pear, apricot, and Marzipan all emerge in this vivacious, high toned, silky beauty.

We never know what the next vintage will bring, but judging from this result, don't be surprised to see more cloudy Roussanne bottlings coming out of Stolpman.