

STOLPMAN VINEYARDS

BALLARD CANYON

SYRAH 2017 *So Hot* *'Sans Soufre'*

TECH

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

Block A High-Density Hillside often used in La
Croce Wine

VARIETAL BLEND

100% Syrah

FINAL ANALYSIS

alcohol: 13.5%

VINIFICATION

Fermented uncrushed, whole-cluster in
sealed 1200 gallon stainless steel variable
capacity tank for 12 days then pressed to
Concrete tank to finish fermentation

VATTING/FERMENTATION

Kept cool, no sulfur added, native yeast -
inoculated with 20 gallons of fermenting
Estate Chardonnay

COOPERAGES & ELEVAGE

Neutral 500L Vache Forest French
Puncheons. No Sulfur added through
bottling

RELEASE DATE

April 2018

HARVEST DATE

September 18, 2017

TOTAL PRODUCTION

250 cases

NOTES

BACKGROUND

As we enjoy French Syrah, especially wines from Cornas and St. Joseph, we ask ourselves how we can make softer, more feathery Syrah in Ballard Canyon. Although we pride ourselves on bright energy and balance in all Stolpman Syrah cuvees, when compared to our favorite French wines, our wines are richer and more coating.

Firmer tannin develops from skins that must ward off intense sun and then insulate against 40 degree drops in temperature every night. Concentration comes naturally from dry farming in a region that receives no rain during the growing season.

If we leave our Syrah grapes uncrushed through fermentation, the texture and flavor from our thick Syrah skins become less invasive. We have the opportunity to make a more, delicate, pretty wine. Picking at slightly lower sugar level and fermenting without Oxygen gives the wine further lift and brightness.

Completely withholding Sulfur allows for fruit purity and nuance.

"Syrah So Hot Right Now" reflects the fun, utterly delicious style of wine we are making, while recognizing that Natural Wine is extremely trendy at the moment. Our creative director Kari Crist decided to substitute our usual copper label with a Hologram that reflects a spectrum of color.

VINTAGE

Like almost every Ballard Canyon vintage, 2017 gave us dry and windy days that allowed Ruben to forgo Sulfur and other fungicide sprays. With the help of diligent work by Cuadrilla, including plucking growth to leave one cluster per shoot, pulling leaves to allow for air-flow, and bird-netting early to prevent spoilage in the vineyard - we were able to bring in pristine fruit for Syrah So Hot.

AT THE WINERY

After carefully sorting all of the clusters, we gently placed them whole, uncrushed into one 1200 gallon variable capacity tank. A few pitchers of fermenting estate Chardonnay natively inoculated the tank before we sealed the top and walked away. As some fruit burst at the bottom of the tank, and other grapes ruptured due to internal fermentation - we decided to open the tank and lightly press the wine after 12 days. We hoped to take the wine off skins early on the "tannin bell-curve" to keep the wine silky. Syrah So Hot finished fermentation in concrete before being moved to neutral French 500L Puncheons previously used for Trousseau. No sulfur was added to the vines, fruit, or wine at any point. We bottled Syrah So Hot early, on January 11, 2018 - to lock in the fresh energy of the wine and ensure the wine wouldn't oxidize in barrel.

SENSORY

While Syrah So Hot comes in a lighter weight package than many of our Syrahs, it is intended to be taken seriously and should develop further layers over the next 2-5 years. After all, we used one of our best high-density Syrah blocks to make this wine.

The wine is intensely purple-hued in color and in aroma. The robust nose is complemented with the savory notes of whole-cluster fermentation. Energetic, high toned red-fruit zips across the front palate with brimming juiciness. A chalky component joins the parade along with further fruit depth and intensity towards the finish. Bright acidity detectably comingles with the fine tannin after swallowing.

Perhaps my favorite thing about Syrah So Hot is the combination of vibrant energy with smooth suppleness. Utterly delicious.