

STOLPMAN

L'AVION

BALLARD CANYON
2020

93% Roussanne / 7% Chardonnay
500 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components
Block 4, 7 Roussanne
Block 3 Chardonnay

Harvest Date
August 25 (Chardonnay)
October 2-20 (Roussanne)

WINERY

Vinification
Crushed and Pressed prior to
native fermentation

Vatting/Fermentation
Roussanne - Native Fermentation
in 100% New French Ermitage
500L Puncheon, Chardonnay -
Native Fermentation in neutral
French Ermitage 500L Puncheon
30 day total fermentation to allow
for flavor extraction and richness.

Cooperage & Elevage
In May 2021, wine was rackblend-
ed and put in 50% New, 50%
Neutral French Ermitage 500L
Puncheon for 12 additional
months prior to bottling. 19
months total barrel age.

13% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND

We feel we have a singular opportunity to make opulent, intriguing Roussanne. Our southern location near 34 degrees latitude gives the Roussanne grapes intense sunshine to tan the grapes their namesake "Rousse" or Rust color. Limestone soils and pacific-influenced cold nights combine to maintain acidity late in the year. Low humidity and high winds keep the grapes clear of mold and for better or worse, we never get significant rainfall through harvest. We can "wait out" the late-ripening grape until it is perfectly golden and concentrated.

La Cuadrilla takes every possible effort in the vineyard to optimize the potential of our Roussanne fruit. In the late summer we pull every leaf away from the fruit to allow for full sun penetration. Then, about a month prior to harvest, when the sun-exposed side of each cluster tans, but the inside of the cluster remains green, every grape cluster is gently hand-rotated 180 degrees to facilitate an even sun-tan. We could not make L'Avion without the focus and determination of our full time crew, La Cuadrilla.

Wine destined for L'Avion must go through three cuts. First, only the two older blocks of Roussanne are eligible for L'Avion. Then, only the prettiest, evenly "Rousse" - or sun tanned - clusters are selected by Cuadrilla. And last, we include only our favorite barrels for L'Avion. At the end of the day, L'Avion accounts for 25-33% of our total Roussanne production each year.

In the late 1930s, teenage cattle rancher Anchor Johnson and his buddies landed their rickety plane down the straight chute where Roussanne is now planted. The young men parked the plane under the oak tree at the end of the dirt strip. Roussanne rows now run lengthwise along the old runway, creating the inspiration for the lanes on the L'Avion label.

VINTAGE

The 2020 vintage started with much needed late rain in March and April. The cold moisture pushed back bud break and set up an anticipated late harvest. Ripening then accelerated after late summer heat waves. While the most significant heat wave arrived earlier in September over Labor Day weekend, another hot streak followed two weeks later. The heat accelerated the ripening of Roussanne and we began "cherry picking" the golden clusters on October 2, returning for several passes through October 20th.

SENSORY

In terms of richness and pure hedonism, the 2020 L'Avion will go down as a benchmark vintage for just how grandiose the iconic white wine can be. The hot, low-yielding 2008 vintage might be the only year to rival the 2020 L'Avion in the twenty year history of the cuvee's production.

Deep gold color. Insanely aromatic honeysuckle with fresh, fleshy Asian pear and popping golden pineapple. An extreme viscosity, rich and coating, yet carrying a fine-tune balance on the mid-palate. The mouth-filling texture rivals the richest of red wines.

Touches of forest and oak take the back seat to the monster, oozing flow of ripeness. Despite the intensity, a mellowing float delivers a laid back pleasure quotient: Close your eyes, enjoy, and just imagine this wine in 20 years!

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