

STOLPMAN VINEYARDS

BALLARD CANYON

LA CROCE 2015

TECH

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

Block A 'La Croce' block, high-density vines

VARIETAL BLEND

50% Syrah + 50% Sangiovese

VINIFICATION

100% de-stemmed

FINAL ANALYSIS

alcohol: 13.5%

VATTING/FERMENTATION

natively co-fermented for 4 weeks - only free run juice used in final cuvee, no press wine

COOPERAGES & ELEVAGE

16 months in once-used 500L Puncheon

RELEASE DATE

October 2017

HARVEST DATE

September 8-19, 2015

TOTAL PRODUCTION

320 cases

2434 ALAMO PINTADO AVE - PO BOX 488

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NOTES

BACKGROUND

When Consultant Alberto Antonini first came to the vineyard in January of 2001, he was shocked to hear us complain about the deluge of Sangiovese and Syrah ripening simultaneously. He had dreamt of such a parallel his entire career in Italy. More specifically, he thought co-fermenting red-hued, high-strung Sangiovese with dark, savory Syrah would create the benchmark for all Super Tuscan blends to follow.

Co-fermenting trumps blending finished barrels because the elements of each varietal integrate together through the process of fermentation. The vast majority of flavor traits develop during the first portion of fermentation, and if that development happens with blended grapes, the wine will be markedly different than trying to blend separate lots later. Of course, the reason not many modern winemakers employ co-fermentation is the inherent lack of control.

Only the magical lots are kept for La Croce, while we give the yummy but not quite life-altering lots to La Cuadrilla for the crew's profit sharing blend.

VINTAGE

The cold conditions of spring 2015 drastically reduced yields. Vines threw all their energy into ripening just a few clusters each. The resulting wines burst with verve and tension promising for long lives in bottle.

With less fruit load, the vines ripened the grapes quickly, causing the earliest harvest in the history of Stolpman Vineyards. In Santa Barbara County, winemakers had the luxury of choosing when to pick. Winter was still months away as sugars accumulated and some folks opted to let fruit hang for even more ripeness. At Stolpman we chose the opposite. As always, we focused on picking taut, pert grapes for fresh, vibrant flavor. Weighing in at only 13.5% alcohol, 2015 La Croce is the lowest octane of any La Croce edition in the wine's 16 year history.

AT THE WINERY

To play into the delicateness of the vintage, we de-stemmed 100% of the fruit, a departure from previous vintages. The pretty red fruit can shine through without more masculine structure blocking it out.

SENSORY

Fresh red fruit, lively and tart, with youthful energy that will evolve for a lifetime in bottle. High toned red currants, dusty rose and violets backed by an exotic, wild spiciness. A tight rope between floral and bright versus earthy and deep. On the other side, leather saddle, charcuterie, and truffles lie underneath those lovely red fruits and flowers. For a lighter-weight vintage of La Croce, the wine packs a full spectrum of flavor.