

The Great Places

SYRAH

BALLARD CANYON AVA

2019

Ruben Solorzano

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

Sourced from the single acre 2007 planting of pre-clonal syrah perched on Stolpman Vineyard's steepest hill, directly above Ballard Creek. 6,000 vines per acre, own-rooted, head-pruned vines worked entirely by hand

GRAPE VARIETY

100% Syrah

ALCOHOL

14%

VINIFICATION FACTS

50% whole cluster, no sulfur through primary+secondary fermentation

VATTING/FERMENTATION

Native Fermentation in open top Concrete tanks for 21 days

COOPERAGES & ELEVAGE

Neutral 500L French Ermitage Puncheons from the Vache Forest

GREAT PLACES SYRAH

We select our highest tier of Syrah, "The Great Places", from 8 acres of our steepest hillsides where we have taken an approach unprecedented in the New World. First, the pre-clonal strains are wholly unique and selected from 100+ year-old vineyard sites. The "pre-clonal" vines ripen clusters with only a few, loose, tiny grapes relative to modern Syrah clones that have been bred for vigor and productivity. Then, these Syrah strains are planted own-rooted and head-pruned at just 2.5 x 3 feet spacing, or 6,000 vines/acre. Each vine puts all of its energy into ripening 2-3 clusters of concentrated, complex fruit. Because of the tight spacing, all work must be done by hand.

The brand is named after one of favorite Serine parcels in Cote-Rotie "Les Grandes Places".

BACKGROUND

Grape Whisperer Ruben Solorzano planted the first test vineyard that would pave the way for the other GREAT PLACES vineyards back in 2007. Ruben crammed 6,000 pre-clonal Syrah vines (that he had secretly acquired) onto one beautiful hillside in marching rows of diagonal trellises directly above Ballard Creek.

VINTAGE

A hallmark collector's year at Stolpman Vineyards, the even, moderate weather of 2019 gave us a smooth, seamless, elegant vintage with ample fresh acidity for long-term cellaring. Wines are nuanced and when enjoyed young, benefit from decanting.

SENSORY

A unique breadth of red-purple-black fruit gives way to a plush body. With air, blacker, smokier and savory notes strike up, adding intrigue. Classic, serious Syrah olive and sangre, all the while with lovely red perfume still persisting. One of the least tannic Ruben's Block vintages since 2008, the wine is delicious out of the gate in a serious, contemplative way but will certainly blossom after 3-5 more years in bottle.