



2007 Stolpman Estate Grown Syrah

The Estate Grown Syrah offers a comprehensive representation of Stolpman Vineyards Terroir. Grapes for this wine come from all of the varied blocks planted at the Estate. The wine is layered and complex, stemming from the vines' struggle to ripen on Limestone hillsides and the diverse array of Syrah clones used. While red fruit dominates the nose upon opening, after some air, deeper brooding black tar flavors appear. Depending on the vintage, we occasionally co-ferment small amounts of Viognier and/or Grenache to produce a broad spectrum of complex flavors. The 2007 contains about 5% Viognier.

Viognier Co-Fermentation is a practice that began hundreds of years ago in the steep hills of the Northern Rhone river gorge. Vintners in Cote Rotie, wishing to produce a wine with more richness (higher alcohol) interplanted Viognier with their Syrah to achieve higher sugar levels at harvest. The naturally fragrant Viognier also adds a bright floral character to the nose of the wine, increasing the aromatic complexity, and at the same time bringing more suppleness to the mouth-feel.

Stolpman Vineyards is proud of their friendship with Domaine Rostaing, one of the finest producers in Cote Rotie. Pierre Rostaing traveled to Santa Ynez for the 2005 vintage to work hand in hand with Sashi Moorman in order to exchange ideas. Since then, Stolpman Vineyards has planted a small vineyard identical to those found in Cote Rotie. These vines are planted on Stolpman's steepest hillside at ultra-high densities of 6,000 plants per acre. Stolpman has been a progressive estate wine project since its inception and this latest vineyard development is an excellent example of our commitment to push our program to higher levels of quality and distinction.

About 2/3 of the 150 acre estate vineyard is planted to Syrah. At 2,200 cases produced, the Estate Syrah is the winery's flagship wine and always represents the Stolpman style: bright fruit that is ripe but never jammy; elegant structure and up-front acidity that balances the wine, allowing it to flexibly pair with food.

The ideal vineyard location for growing Syrah draws other winemakers to source Syrah from Stolpman. Over the past 17 years winery customers have included: Sine Qua Non, Ojai Vineyards, Qupe, Jaffurs, Lillian, Jelly Roll, Whitcraft, Dragonette, Ampelos, Sanguis, Arcadian, among other prestigious wineries.

The 2007 Estate Syrah shows bright and lifted, with youthful tannin and acidity. The robust structure makes it an easy pairing with almost any meat. While listed at 14.5% alcohol, the true content is closer to 14.25% by volume. Even heat throughout the season made 2007 a remarkably balanced, focused syrah.

Stephen Tanzer International Wine Cellar **93 Points**

Robert Parker Wine Advocate **91-94 Points**