

STOLPMAN

HAIR OF THE BEAR

BALLARD CANYON
2020

75% Petite Sirah / 25% Roussanne
210 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components
Block 1 Petite Sirah,
Block 3 Roussanne

Harvest Date
October 6

WINERY

Vinification
100% de-stemmed

Vatting/Fermentation
Concrete open top fermenta-
tion cold soak for 5 days, 20
day native fermentation, 10
more days on skins prior to
draining

Cooperage & Elevage
75% new 500L French oak
Ermitage puncheon and 25%
neutral 500L French oak
Ermitage puncheon

14.5% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND

We've bottled wine from the 3.5 acre 1992 planting of Petite Sirah on only a few occasions. Especially in the extremes of Ballard Canyon, winemakers must wait for the Petite Sirah skins to soften in order to avoid burly, coarse tannins. This often means picking at extremely high sugars and bottling wines with hotter alcohol levels than we prefer.

In 2016, winemaker Kyle Knapp had the brilliant idea of co-fermenting the powerful, black varietal with soft, rich, and cushioning Roussanne. Roussanne ripens extremely late here on the vineyard, so it naturally brings the sugar content down – translating to 1.5% less alcohol than if we left the Petite Sirah monocepage. During fermentation, the golden Roussanne polishes the raw power of the Petite Sirah into an elegant, fine wine.

In recognition of the winemaker's triumphant experiment, artist Eric Beltz drew a rugged, older, perhaps more dapper version of Kyle Knapp emerging from the wilderness with a domesticated bear by his side. A parallel to Roussanne taming the wild Petite Sirah.

The term "Hair of the Bear" described a top-notch frontiersman or trapper back in the days of the Wild West and California Gold Rush.

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.

While the heatwaves created an unprecedentedly ripe profile in Hair of the Bear; the slow, mature Petite Sirah vines had time to recover and regain balance after the heat, before harvesting October 6.

SENSORY

The biggest, richest, blackest Hair of the Bear wine yet produced, even beating out the inaugural, warm-weather 2016 vintage. Opaquely black in color and profile with swirling purple notes.

Lining the plunging black walls of the abyss - eucalyptus, barrique, and toast compliment the fruit with a fine structure. Despite the massive ripeness, the wine shows savory nuance, a secondary "otherness", bordering on fennel and dried herbs. Acidity and tannin somehow bring the wine to a balanced, dry finish pointing to a long-life in bottle when the wine can unfurl and mellow.

◊ Estate, So Fresh, Combe ◊

2434 ALAMO PINTADO AVE, LOS OLIVOS CA 93441
TEL. 1 805 688 0400