

Stolpman

HAIR OF THE BEAR

75% Petite Sirah, 25% Roussanne
440 cases produced



Stolpman's Polished Petite Sirah

Prior to Hair of the Bear, we 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 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 and refines the raw power of the Petite Sirah. 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.

Healthy winter rain, almost mirroring 2023 precipitation pattern, set us off on a relatively late bud break. The vines naturally set a lighter crop than 2023, and minimal cluster thinning was needed as the vines had already balanced themselves. Summer proved beautifully moderate, and weather didn't warm up until the second week of September.

The raw power and concentration of 2024 tees up the biggest cuvee in the Stolpman Quiver to win over any "big red" lover.

Blackberry compote lavished over sheer blackness. Hints of energetic red energy flicker on the nose and illuminate the dark, sleek passage through the palate. The presence of a latent sangre, carnal liveliness lurks somewhere in the dark shadows keeping the wine exciting instead of monolithic. In its youth, the wine finishes with firm tannins tempered by chocolate truffle ganache sweetness.

Vintage 2024

Region Stolpman Estate
Vineyard, Ballard Canyon
AVA

Components Old vine (1992
planting) Block 1 Petite Sirah
co-fermented with Block 3
Roussanne

Farming CCOF Organic
Certified & Demeter Biody-
namic Certified

Harvest Date October 30

Vinification 100%

de-stemmed native fermen-
tation for 15 days

Vatting/Fermentation 60%
Stainless steel, 40% open top
concrete fermenting tanks

Cooperage & Elevage 80%
neutral and 20% once or
twice-used 500L Ermitage
Vache Forest Puncheons for
19 months

14.5% Alc by Vol

Stolpman Vineyards

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