

STOLPMAN

LA CUADRILLA

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
2022

60% Syrah / 30% Grenache / 5% Mourvèdre / 5% Sangiovese
10,500 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components

A vineyard-wide blend accounts for 70% of the blend, with 30% sourced from Ruben Solorzano's vineyards throughout Santa Barbara County.

Harvest Date

September 7 - October 21

WINERY

Vinification

70% de-stemmed,
30% whole-cluster

Vatting/Fermentation

Open-top concrete fermenting
tanks for 21 days

Cooperage & Elevage

100% neutral French Ermitage 500L
oak Puncheons for 6 months

SENSORY

Soft and becoming deep purple plum brimmed with a crackling flame of red. A coating plushness fills the mouth prior to lifted fresh red fruits rising again towards the finish. The red fruits fill a spectrum from firm cherry to riper berry coulis. Subtle acidity married with the red berry fruit and loamy, silty tannin all combine to last in the mouth for minutes in a delicately balanced, feathered finish.

14% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND - LA CUADRILLA "THE CREW"

When Tom Stolpman purchased the land that is now Stolpman Vineyards, he declared that if his dream of owning a vineyard was to come true, it would positively affect everyone involved. He asked vineyard manager Ruben Solorzano to employ our vineyard workers year-round, so the team members could have a steady job, a career, and raise their families locally and with security.

Ruben Solorzano took Tom's idea a step further: he aimed to further engage our workers. He wanted our crew members to learn the lifecycle of the vine and become engaged and passionate about their work.

A man of action, Ruben started a training program in which he gave one Cuadra - a small vineyard block - to his team, so they would take responsibility for their land. Each crew member became the farmer rather than just the worker. A few years later, once the crew had independently mastered vineyard management, Ruben revealed his grand experiment to Mr. Stolpman. Thrilled, Tom declared that all of the wine made from the crew's training Cuadra would be given to the team members for their own consumption. Having the self-titled wine at the dinner table served as both a source of pride and a chance to appreciate fine wine, the fruits of the crew's labor!

Beginning with the 2009 vintage, we expanded the Cuadrilla program to blend in more wine from the vineyard in addition to the training Cuadra. Today, at least 10% of the vineyard's production goes into the blend. The profits are returned to the crew members, divided by seniority, in the form of both a year-end bonus as well as weekly bonuses on each paycheck. The big year-end bonus allows the crew members a chance to add to their savings and overall cushion, while the weekly bonus aims to increase the quality of everyday life for La Cuadrilla and their families.

Because Ruben rotates the Cuadra to a different area of the vineyard each year, the blend of La Cuadrilla may change each vintage. Inspired by the perpetual evolution and innovation, creative director Kari Crist designs a new black and white image for each vintage's release. The photos always relate to the Cuadrilla members.

LABEL : THE MOTHER VINE

In 2013, we planted one special pre-clonal cutting in the middle of a half-acre hillside. The following winter, we trenched the vine's growth underground and then up 3 adjacent posts, keeping the original mother vine connected to her 3 daughters. The buds buried underground naturally grew roots, and the buds near the shoots' ends, sticking back up in the air, grew leaves and eventually clusters. We repeated this process each year and in 2023, the Mother Vine is up to almost 1,000 interconnected vine heads. The dream is to produce a few hundred bottles from this one vine spawning a half acre. She will be complete at over 2,000 heads around 2031, and this project would never be feasible without the meticulous, long-term dedication of La Cuadrilla.

◊ Estate, So Fresh, Combe ◊

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STOLPMAN

ESTATE GROWN SYRAH

BALLARD CANYON
2022

100% Syrah
3300 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components

A blend of almost all Syrah
blocks on Ballard Canyon
Estate

Harvest Date

September 8 - October 15

WINERY

Vinification

50% De-Stemmed,
50% whole-cluster

Vatting/Fermentation

Native fermentation in concrete
ranging from 15 to 25 days

Cooperage & Elevage

100% Neutral French Ermitage
500L Oak Puncheons for 9
months

14% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND

Estate Grown Syrah has long been the flagship of Stolpman Vineyards and the standard bearer of the entire Syrah-focused Ballard Canyon AVA.

The Estate Grown Syrah cuvee includes the oldest "original" vines in Ballard Canyon planted throughout the 1990s as well as the mature, high density and own-rooted vineyards planted in the 2000s. Some of the newest, revolutionary pre-clonal massal selection Syrah also makes its way into this "main" Syrah bottling.

Year after year, the wine's richness + liveliness 1-2 combo showcases Ballard Canyon's cold nights and the short period of daytime warmth in between Pacific fog and cool wind. Stolpman's Limestone subsoil elevates the bright natural acidity. Ruben Solorzano's refusal to give the vines irrigation during much of the always-dry growing season lends terrific concentration.

VINTAGE

A second year of drought reduced our 2022 yields and led to a small crop. Our vines naturally set only a few tiny clusters each, resetting themselves after over-delivering a healthy 2021 yield despite the lack of rain. A Labor Day heatwave further intensified the ripe flavor concentration of the tiny clusters.

As is typical, despite the lower yields and heat-compacted harvest, we picked Estate Syrah throughout a 5 week period, strategically nailing each exposure and vine-density at ideal balance.

SENSORY

In its youth, 2022 Estate Grown Syrah carries a torch of intense, high toned red fruit with a captivating fleshy texture. Delicately silky yet deceivingly thick and round mouthfeel backed by playfully chalky tannin. Ripe, dense cherry and fiery red plum shine brightness through the palate. A wine of flare and unabashed confidence, certainly a high water mark for the flagship Estate Grown Syrah cuvee.

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STOLPMAN

SANGIOVESE

BALLARD CANYON
2020

100% Sangiovese
1800 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components
1994 planting of Rodino Clone
Sangiovese & High-Density
Hilltops "La Croce" block

Harvest Date
October 6-13

WINERY

Vinification
100% de-stemmed

Vatting/Fermentation
Native fermentation in
concrete. Old vine lots pressed
dry at 10-11 days, La Croce lots
pressed dry at 22-24 days

Cooperage & Elevage
Free run only, aged in 100%
Neutral French Ermitage Vache
Forest 500L Puncheon for 21
months

14.5% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND

Estate Sangiovese comes predominantly from the original 10 acres of Sangiovese that Tom Stolpman planted in 1994. The Santa Barbara sunshine and long growing season create a richer, denser version of Sangiovese compared to what is found in the grape's Tuscan homeland. Stolpman's cold nights and Limestone soils retain the acidity that brings our New World version back to balance. The younger 2004 High Density Hilltop "La Croce" Sangiovese, occasionally culled off into a reserve "Sangio degli Angeli" cuvee, brings heightened concentration and intensity to the wine.

Aged 21 months in neutral large Ermitage 500L french oak puncheons, Sangiovese's tell-tale acidity and tannin have the time to integrate and slip into the rich, ripe mid-palate.

VINTAGE

Sangiovese ripens at the tail end of Syrah harvest, and this slightly later ripening pattern gave the vines time to fully recover from the record breaking heat wave at the beginning of September 2020. While this recovery month allowed for balance – it also delivered an unprecedented opulence and luxury to the cuvee.

SENSORY

Simply put, our best Estate Sangiovese vintage in the 25 year history of producing it.

We are acutely aware of this superlative language as the 2018 vintage had, up until its release, been our favorite vintage yet. 2019 then trumped 2018 upon its release. And now we simply feel like Estate Sangiovese Cheerleaders with the 2020 being so clearly THE BEST we have ever made. Luckily the critics agree with us, and the 2020 Estate Sangiovese is ranked evenly alongside our most limited production, most expensive wines in 2020, our most highly rated vintage in the history of Stolpman Vineyards.

Intoxicating red perfume – the magic that makes French perfumeries world famous – so far beyond mere rose petals or putting the names of red fruits in a wine description. The mouth carries freshness, richness, and bold intensity all bound in one singular flow. Deep below, a darker pipe smoke begins to give way to the savory finish. Only after swallowing are we reminded of the varietal, with a refined version of the trademark Tuscan tannin and acidity creating a 1-2 combo peeking out to blow a kiss goodbye and leave you eagerly awaiting the next deep sniff and sip.

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STOLPMAN

ANGELI

BALLARD CANYON
2021

100% Syrah
560 cases produced

VINEYARD

Components
2002 Own-rooted Massal
selection

Harvest Date
October 8

WINERY

Vinification
33% whole cluster

Vatting/Fermentation
Native fermentation in concrete
for 11 days

Cooperage & Elevage
Aged 15 months in 100%
Neutral French Ermitage Vache
Forest 500L Puncheon

14% Alc by Vol

BACKGROUND

Founder Tom Stolpman wanted to honor his wife, Marilyn, and her family, the Angeli clan, by naming his best wine after her. After decades of research and experimentation, the Angeli wine has now been sourced from her own block for well over a decade. These vines represent our oldest own-rooted Syrah planting – a planting practice that while risky, delivers a whole new level of potential for our wines. Only the hilltop, ridgeline section of the block is cherry-picked for Angeli each year, and then only our favorite barrels make the cut.

VINTAGE

When it comes to the 2021 Angeli, I am reminded of both the 2018 and 2019 vintages. On paper, looking at our climatic and yield data, all three were years very similar and from the eyes of a statistician, as close to perfection as a coastal vintner can ever get. Warm days and cool nights, breezy but not damaging, etc. Yet each block-specific cuvee from these "perfect" vintages comes with its unique vintage profile stamp. To sum them up, while all amazing barrel selections from this prized hilltop, the 2018 proved more mellow, 2019 more savory, and 2021 more fierce.

SENSORY

Touches of high-toned fresh red fruit and wet stone dust the rim before falling into opaque purple. Intensity carries the day. Whereas most red cuvees from 2021 give smooth, suppleness – 2021 shows only fiery potential upon release – a wine to be checked in upon 5, 10 years from now and on and on.

Speaking to its "built-to-age" profile, an undercurrent of acid arrives mid-palate under the thick coats of texture and builds alongside tannin through the finish.

The magic is already there. Hints of feral, Syrah bloodiness are already checked by pleasurable fruit. I just look forward to the day when these massive textures, aromas, and flavors integrate and intertwine to hit a whole new level of harmonious euphoria. I think about 2013 Angeli right now and swoon about what the 2021 will be at that age!

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