

STOLPMAN

≠ Estate, So Fresh, Combe ≠

NEBBIOLO 2020

TECH

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

½ acre south-facing Nebbiolo block perched on top of the vineyard in between Hilltops Syrah and the oldest vines in Ballard Canyon (Block 1)

VARIETAL BLEND

100% Nebbiolo

VINIFICATION

De-stemmed, no sulfur through primary fermentation

FINAL ANALYSIS

alcohol: 14.5%

VATTING/FERMENTATION

Open top stainless steel tank

COOPERAGES & ELEVAGE

10 months in a neutral 225L French Oak Barrel

RELEASE DATE

March 2022

HARVEST DATE

October 6, 2020

TOTAL PRODUCTION

22 cases

BACKGROUND

Tom Stolpman's love affair with Italian wine became cemented in 1993 when he and his wife Marilyn spent weeks in Rome for a legal case involving artifacts in the Vatican Library. The following winter, he asked Ruben to plant 10 acres each of Nebbiolo and Sangiovese. Stolpman collectors fell in love with both and today we have 21 acres of Sangiovese planted. The Nebbiolo clonal material available in California back then turned out not to be the greatest and the vines began to weaken, ripening later each year. Despite the loyal following, Stolpman made the last vintage from that original Nebbiolo block in 2003. We continued to sell fruit to other winemakers through the 2010 vintage. Then, when frost damaged the Nebbiolo buds in April of 2011, we decided to graft the remaining vines to Grenache and Roussanne. Ever since then, Tom has pestered his son, Pete, who took over the operation in 2009, to replant his beloved Nebbiolo. Longtime collectors cheered Tom on, as they slowly depleted their stocks of those classic, beautifully-aged 1998-2003 vintages.

In 2017, Pete and Ruben planted 500 vines of the newly available VCR-11 clone that the Vivai Cooperativi Rauscedo nursery meticulously selected from Piedmont. Ruben and Pete presented the 500th vine to Tom at his 68th birthday party and Tom proudly gave the vine a drink from a 9-liter bottle of aged Schramsberg Blanc de Blanc as its first "irrigation" once in the ground.

In 2018, we harvested a tiny amount of grapes, just enough for a few six packs of Magnums for Tom to drink. The 2020 crop dropped significantly from 2019 to just one barrel. After allocating a few cases to Tom's cellar, just 22 cases are available to wine club members. The wine will be sold out immediately upon release.

VINTAGE

The warm 2020 vintage created hedonistic, ripe, rich wines. However, the 2020 Nebbiolo shows remarkable freshness and energy on the nose. The warmth of the vintage perhaps shows itself in a rich, fleshiness on the mid-palate.

SENSORY

Fresh red fruit and rose petals on the nose possess a vibrant energy and indicate many years of aging ahead of the 2020 Nebbiolo. Fine chalky tannins are already well-integrated thanks to the subtly full body that delicately coats the mouth and finish. I can't wait to try this wine in 5 years, and again at 10, and 15 years to discover what further layers unfurl.

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