

STOLPMAN VINEYARDS

BALLARD CANYON

PARA MARIA 2017

de las tecolotes

TECH

VINEYARD COMPONENTS

Selected from vineyard sites by veteran Stolpman Vineyard Manager, the Grape Whisperer, Ruben Solorzano

VARIETAL BLEND

80% Syrah, 20% Petite Verdot

VINIFICATION

40% Syrah (whole-cluster Carbonic Fermentation in sealed tank), 40% Syrah (de-stemmed, traditional open top fermentation), 20% Petite Verdot (de-stemmed, open-top)

FINAL ANALYSIS

alcohol: 14.1%

VATTING/FERMENTATION

All stainless steel tanks, sealed for Carbonic, open-topped for crushed fermentation

COOPERAGES & ELEVAGE

100% neutral oak barrels for 9 months

RELEASE DATE

October 2018

HARVEST DATE

Carbonic Syrah: Aug 27 – Sept 1 2017,
Syrah: September 12-21 2017,
Petite Verdot: October 16 2017

TOTAL PRODUCTION

4400 cases

BACKGROUND

Maria Solorzano is shy around visitors and quick to smile. For anyone that sees her in action, it is clear that she leads by the example of her hard-work. Maria is most comfortable in her routine of perpetual motion out on the vineyard – checking the vines and directing the crew. Maria, solely in charge with a quiet, commanding presence, heads the day-to-day operation at Stolpman. She runs perhaps the hardest working, most passionate vineyard crew in the world. On a daily basis she teaches La Cuadrilla new techniques to execute a constant barrage of experiments – often adapting on the fly – figuring out practical ways of farming ridiculously high-density vineyards by hand or training canopies for ideal shading and wind-flow.

Label Art: The nickname for villagers from Santa Cruz, Jalisco; Maria's hometown, is "Tecolote" – or night owl. The name stems from the popular late night parties thrown in the town. Maria and La Cuadrilla also turn nocturnal for three months out of the year to harvest in the cold night air for maximum freshness. A resident female Great Horned Owl is the most prolific rodent control beast on the vineyard.

The Para Maria Brand is a 50-50 partnership between the Stolpman and Solorzano families.

VINTAGE

Once again, growing conditions in 2017 allowed for a significant percentage of whole-grape carbonic fermentation. A Labor Day Weekend (September 2-4) Heat Wave became the defining climatic event for 2017 Para Maria Red Wine as all Syrah harvested prior to the heat came in at low enough sugars to employ Carbonic fermentation. All Syrah (and Petite Verdot) thereafter, was traditionally crushed and fermented.

AT THE WINERY

We are only comfortable forcing ambient yeast to anaerobically ferment in our sealed carbonic tanks if there is a total absence of bird/bee damage, no mold/mildew present, and if we are able to harvest the fruit at relatively low sugars (sub 24 brix). After careful sorting, all Syrah harvested prior to Labor Day heat was fermented whole-cluster, carbonic.

We allowed the vines to recover for a week following the heat spike and then resumed harvesting the later-ripening vineyards. Because sugars had accumulated over the 10 day lapse, all remaining Syrah was destemmed and crushed, with multiple extracting pump-overs for enhanced color, richness, and texture.

In order to maximize the juicy "yum" quotient of the Petite Verdot, it too was 100% destemmed and gently circulated with skins, seeds and pulp.

SENSORY

2017 Para Maria sees an increase in freshness and verve from the uptick (40%) in Carbonic Syrah. The traditional Syrah portion wound up opulent and rich to balance the bright energy of the Carbonic portion. An increase to 20% Petite Verdot augmented the deep purple and black fruit flavor and granted enveloping, coating textures on the finish.

A pop of bright cherry makes its first impression on the nose while in the mouth an exciting high-toned floating texture accompanies the continued happy-red spray of flavor. The backbone of the wine comes off as succulent grilled Nopales (cactus) as the juiciness finishes with a splash of blueberry.