



## RUBEN'S BLOCK

*Syrah, Stolpman Vineyards, Ballard Canyon, 2011*

### BACKGROUND

Ruben's Block faces east, perched above Ballard Creek on our property's steepest hillside. In its fourth year of production, our unique 1x1 meter Cote Rotie planting grew without irrigation or mechanization.

### VINTAGE

Held 2 years in bottle after a year and a half in barrel, Ruben's Block is the last wine to be released from the frost-reduced 2011 vintage. The highest density block in the vineyard, the reduction in crop-load had a profound effect on these 88 cases of precious wine.

With each vintage comes new insight into how to master this unprecedented planting. In 2011, Ruben delayed harvesting his block to allow a finer tannin structure and more approachability when young. With so little fruit harvested from each vine, the density of foliage allowed for intensity of flavor beyond any fruit we've ever worked with. The leaves run diagonally up single posts and then shoot straight for the sky. Every leaf works to ripen just a couple tiny clusters of grapes hanging below, inches from the ground.

### HIGH DENSITY

Due to the high density plantings, no tractors can fit within the high-density rows. With every vintage, we see the positive effects of such low-impact, hand work. The block exudes healthiness. Subsequently, the wine carries vibrant, high-toned energy throughout the nose and palate.

*Cote Rotie on the Central Coast*  
88 cases produced