

Bridge Street Social

Sept '24 WINE FAM

Greetings awesome fam!

How was your summer? Hurry and soak-in every last drop, wherever you are! And drink all the wine your heart desires! They say rosé season ends on Labor Day, but we never agreed with that silly 'rule'. Remember that in November :)

Speaking of rules, we kinda bent them for this release, in the best way possible. We are back with our second annual installment of wines from Stolpman Vineyards in Ballard County, California. We have had a long relationship with Pete Stolpman and his crew and absolutely love their wines. So, every September we bring you four wines from them that have not been made available in Michigan. Mostly these are wines that you would only have access to at the winery!



Your individual writeups this month are coming to you courtesy of the fine folks who keep our wine culture going strong, but here is a summary of Stolpman as a whole:

Stolpman is located in Ballard Canyon (northwest of Santa Barbara) and is considered part of the greater Santa Ynez Valley AVA along with being recognized as part of the Central Coast

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growing region. Situated in the heart of the East-West maritime chute known, Ballard Canyon experiences cold nights and short periods of day-time heat. The diurnal swing approaches 40 degrees and it is typical to have daytime highs over 90 degrees Fahrenheit and lows around 50 during the growing season. The climate and soils in the region lend themselves well to growing Rhone Valley varietals, which Stolpman spends much time on.



Stolpman Vineyards was founded by Tom Stolpman in the mid-90's, mainly as a growing operation and quickly developed a reputation as growing amazing grapes for wine. Some of the early clients of Stolpman were Sine Qua Non and Daou. His son, Pete, took over in the late 2000's and shifted the focus to wine making. From there the wines produced by Stolpman have achieved amazing acclaim.

See you soon on our FB page, and at the restaurant. In the meantime, let's all hold on to summer as long as we can!

Cheers!

Mike Luther
owner/executive chef

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Stolpman Vineyards – Ballard Canyon, Santa Barbara, CA
'Sun and Earth' (2021)

You'll get used to 'Ballard Canyon', as Stolpman is 100% responsible for making Ballard Canyon an officially recognized wine growing region. The term for official winegrowing regions in the United States are, 'AVA' (American Viticultural Area). Ballard Canyon is essentially a replica of the Rhone Valley, although it runs west to east where the Rhone runs north to south. Much of the climate and ocean effect is the same and therefore Rhone varietals (Syrah, Grenach, Mourvedre, Roussane, Viognier) perform at a high level in this AVA.

This is a heavy hitter made from Mourvedre (38%), Grenache (38%), and Syrah (24%). A classic Rhone-varietal blend brought to you from the hills of the Ballard Canyon. I recommend you share this bottle over a luxurious, home-cooked meal, as this is a wine that begs for food, and also letting it decant for at least 30 minutes (preferably closer to an hour) before you start enjoying it. Once you do, you'll be met with juicy plums, black cherries, wet leaves, char grilled meats and toasted fennel seeds on the nose, followed by a rich, opulent mouthfeel consisting of smoke, worn leather, juicy blackberries, fresh figs, wet slate and the slightest hint of buttery rolls. Fine, silky tannins accompany the dry, full-bodied finish.

I drank this bottle with curry-spiced roasted carrots and a ribeye steak au poivre. The sweetness of the carrots and richness of the meat paired perfectly with the baking spice notes and earthiness of the wine. In similar fashion, I would recommend pairing this wine with any number of warmly spiced fall dishes, especially those including root vegetables, squashes and fall herbs. If you want to go lighter, Mediterranean flavors would meld perfectly with the notes of

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fig, fennel and oregano that arise once the wine has fully opened. A well spiced leg of lamb accompanied by an acidic side salad with olives and feta comes to mind. But there's no rush, this wine is young and could easily cellar for up to ten more years to come. Whenever you choose to indulge, we hope you enjoy.

Cheers!

Rae
your fearless bartender
and resident somm

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Stolpman Vineyards – Ballard Canyon, Santa Barbara, CA
'Para Maria Reserva' (2021)

Introducing the mysterious Para Maria Reserva. I say mysterious because as you take a look at the vibrant, colorful bottle featuring a female great horned owl, that not only represents the best rodent controller of the vineyard, but also pays homage to the harvest, that takes place 3 months out of the year at night, as the cold air produces a freshness in the grapes. To add to that, as you turn the bottle around, you won't see any grapes listed on the bottle itself. The cepage is a mixture of Syrah and Petit Verdot grapes, made in a classic California Syrah style.

This well rounded wine is smooth, juicy, bright, chewy and leathery. On the nose, similar to palate you may find some deep rich fruits, such as plums and pomegranate. I found it to be a little earthy, with a touch of coffee grounds, oak, leather, and almost a note of incense. As it opens up more, you may find a little barnyard funk and gameyness. You'd expect the tannins to be higher, but I felt that it was well balanced with the acid to bring a rich, yet delicate body. Which all comes together to produce something beautifully deep and complex, without taking itself too seriously.

I'll admit, this wine is straight up my alley, so I'm partial to pairing this with many dishes, or to decant and drink this beauty for the pure joy of it. If I were to pair this with food, I think you could easily sip this alongside some light summer dishes, such as a strawberry goat cheese salad with a poppyseed dressing. Something hearty and bold like steak and potatoes, or a pork chop. Something comforting and warm, like a butternut squash soup, maybe chili. I personally decanted this with a meatlovers pizza, and had a lovely time.

I challenge you to find something it doesn't pair well with, but overall I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.

– Samantha Robbe
our hospitality lead
and wine hobbyist

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Stolpman Vineyards - Ballard Canyon, Santa Barbara, CA
Grenache (2022)

Originating from Spain, commonly grown in France (and one of the key members of the notable GSM blend from Southern Rhone), and one of the most popular red grapes grown across the world. This is a 100% Grenache from Stolpman Vineyards.

In the glass, this wine is a gemstone in liquid form. This 2022 Stolpman Estate Grenache is a gorgeous ruby with slight undertones of violet. The color is rich but not bright, and the wine is still clear with no notable particulates in the glass. Truly, if there was ever a poem of old describing a French Duchess or Spanish King with a glass of ruby-red wine in their hand, this is the color of the rich ruby liquid in their royal hand. Immediately from the first pour, you'll notice this is a heavily perfumed, heady, and complex wine. One might notice a strong aroma of fresh and stewed strawberries and raspberries, including the tart scent of red currant and even some dried cranberries and herbs. A slight subtle note of blue and black fruit comes next, with a mixed jam of blackberries and blueberries, complete with the peppery nose from the seeds. There is even the suggestion of some spiced fruit—a blood orange mixed with some cinnamon, black pepper, and allspice—along with some spiced plums. The fruit is accompanied by a lovely note of fresh leather—a newly upholstered couch or lounge chair, perhaps—along with the ever-so-slight hint of vanilla. This already heady nose is punctuated by a small bit of crushed dried herbs. The bouquet from this 2022 Stolpman Estate Grenache is perhaps the ultimate fall

candle scent. This wine's heady nature is also present in its flavor profile, with a hefty 14.5% ABV, and a surprisingly large body for the delicate and clear color of the wine. Medium-full

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body, mouth-filling, and a lovely balance of fruit, structure, inorganic tones, and acidity. This is not a lush, velvety wine, nor is it a rough tannin-bomb of sandpaper on the tongue; this is a pleasant and friendly wine, with just enough personality to tease and tickle the tongue and cheeks. The fruit calls back to what was detected on the nose, with both fresh and stewed red fruit, jammy and peppery dark fruits, and also, surprisingly, a bit of dried cranberry with punctuated tartness. The structure of this wine has aged quite well for such a young vintage; the oak is present, but does not overstay its welcome. Instead, we are pleased by the appearance of white pepper, a bit of aged leather, and just a hint of vanilla and cocoa for roundness. We are once again greeted by some mild herbaceous notes, that invite the mind to think of a distant waft of dried rosemary, mint, and sage burning within a hidden cage of incense somewhere nearby. Finally, the limestone-rich soil the vines inhabit are present with notes of wet crushed gravel, similar to the smell of a light rain falling on a walking path in the early days of Autumn. This wine is sophisticated and lovely on its own, but would also enjoy the company of food. In particular, it would pair well with mild cheeses and fresh red and black berries, along with salted crackers and a dark, peppery jam. For a less on-the-nose pairing, it's suggested to drink this wine alongside grilled red meats and poultry, including beef, lamb, and chicken. Due to the relatively notable acidity, this wine would also graciously pair with "fattier" dishes, such as a beef stew, or a chili with a meat of your choosing.

Spice works well with this wine; cumin, pepper, and vegetables flavored with common Asian spices such as ginger and cardamom will help to bring out the peppery notes of this wine. We hope you feel spoiled by this wine, and take plenty of time to explore just how complex and lovely this 2022 Grenache truly is.

Ramius Manière-Spencer aka Remy
our resident server/bartender/somm extraordinaire

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Stolpman Vineyards - Ballard Canyon, Santa Barbara, CA
Viognier (2023)

This lively white wine is quite the surprise. When I first saw this wine I thought it would be lighter in taste. Seeing 50% new French oak and 50% stainless steel had a great impact on the final product. Very clean, but with structure, which it gains from the oak.

This wine is bright and crunchy with acidity, but not overwhelmed with too much bite. The palate is a wonderful mixture of flowers and citrus fruit. Where you get flowers such as Honeysuckle and rose petals, you are treated to fruits like over ripe apple, peach, and tangerine.

When thinking about food pairings, this wine is perfect for any salad featuring citrus. On the other side of that coin would be any lighter meat that has been flavored with aromatic herbs like tarragon.

This big and round wine will pair beautifully with all kinds of hearty dishes, perfect for a late summer cookout. I'm curious how it'd taste with brats & kraut (?). As for waiting to put this on your Thanksgiving Day table, good luck!