

La Clarine 'Angle of Repose' 2019

Producer: Hank Beckmeyer and Caroline Hoël

Provenance: Sierra Foothills, California

Farming: Organic

Grape(s): Tannat and Grenache

Vineyard: young vine vineyard with rocky, clay soil.

Vintage: Hank writes: "Beautiful, easy, lovely harvest. Everything went right. It was a remarkably unremarkable vintage that seems to have made really remarkable wines."

Fermentation/ Aging: Both varieties were picked and whole cluster pressed together into flextank for spontaneous fermentation. After fermentation, the base wine was racked to a mix of neutral barrel and flextank for aging on gross lees.

Fining/ Filtration: none.

Sulfite: after a few years with occasional mouse issues, they now add up to 20ppm sulfite at crush. 20 ppm added at bottling.

Misc: 'Angle of repose' describes the definite reproducible angle with the horizontal leveled surface when granular solids are piled on a flat surface. Hank says: "I find the name has a nice ring to it. Plus, I like that some people will think about it a bit...who doesn't like a little bit of mystery in their lives?"



The Producer:

If wine writer Terry Theise's notion that distinctiveness as precondition for greatness is correct, La Clarine Farm is certainly primed for immortality. The La Clarine wines are teeming with life in a way that separates them from even the most lively of French natural producers. Self-proclaimed refugees from the music business, Hank Beckmeyer and Caroline Hoël began the project thinking they'd try a few things and if people liked it, they'd continue. Recovering biodynamic farmers, they have evolved from Steiner's method of rigorous input to Fukuoka's method of careful observation. Although they purchase the majority of their fruit, Hank writes about the quantum entanglement of vineyard, winery and winemaker; a cellar-inclusive addendum to the conception of terroir. The La Clarine wines are bottled inquiries, cloudy with curiosity and a bursting state of vivacious play that makes them a joy to drink and endlessly fascinating.

The Vineyard:

The vineyard was planted for them in 2015 by Ron Mansfield, one of the preeminent figures in El Dorado viticulture. The vineyard was planted 50/50 Tannat and Grenache, a combination Hank and Caroline have had success with at their home vineyard. The soils are rocky clay. This is the first fruiting year harvest for these young vines and the Tannat yields were lower than the Grenache so they decided to produce a rosé.

The Winery:

The two varieties were picked and whole cluster pressed simultaneously to polyethylene flex tank for spontaneous fermentation. After ferment, the base wine was racked to a mix of neutral barrel and flextank for aging.

After a few experiences with wines developing mousey off-flavor, Hank has shifted his sulfite application up to 20 ppm during crush to discourage the overeager lactic acid bacteria populations that are substantially more sensitive to sulfite than yeast. Bottled with another 20 ppm added sulfite.

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