

Les Lunes 'Venturi Vineyard Zinfandel' 2018

Producer - Diego Roig & Shaunt Oungouliau - Les Lunes/ Populis

Provenance: Northern California

Farming: Organic, dry farmed

Grape(s): 100% Zinfandel

Vineyard(s): Venturi Vineyard in Mendocino planted between 1944-48. Gravelly loam with fist sized alluvial deposits.

Vintage: 2018 was a long, cool vintage with harvest taking place 2-3 weeks later than normal resulting in lower alcohol, high acid wines with great ripeness to balance.

Fermentation: whole cluster, slowly foot crushed over a period of weeks in polyethylene flex tanks. Pressed after 30 days into 225L French oak barrel for 22 months of aging.

Fining/ Filtration: none.

Sulfite: 18ppm added after after the completion of malolactic conversion. None added at bottling.



The Producer:

Les Lunes represents the 'vigneron' project of Diego Roig and Shaunt Oungouliau of Populis fame. A vehicle for regenerative farming that has been steadily expanding, they have converted 40 acres of conventionally farmed vineyards to organic practices. Supplemented by historic vineyards grown by multi-generational farmers with the same ethos, the Les Lunes wines are studies in tactful winemaking that emphasize minimalism over cellar acrobatics. Les Lunes represents about one third of their 4,000 case output and with each successive harvest they inch closer to their goal of working exclusively with grapes they farm themselves. The cellar craft is gentle, patience is the primary tool used to get the best out of the bottle. These are wines that speak to yesteryear's dreamy Cali vibe, capturing the golden hue of 1970's Californian viticulture. Sooooo....time travel wine?

The Vineyard

Venturi Vineyard spans 40 acres steeped in the history of Italo-American migration in the tumultuous time between the World Wars. Larry, a mentor to Diego and Shaunt, started growing grapes as a side hustle with his wife shortly after they were married in the 1960's. Their weekend passion grew until they decided to go full-time, buying the vineyard planted by his grandfather in 1948. The vineyard was formed by alluvial flows leaving fist sized stones and is typified by deep gravelly loam soils with shale, quartz and sandstone. Low pH and good drainage with low organic matter.

In the 1950's, the family's heirloom vineyard was cut in two by the creation of highway 101. On the east side the Sauvignon Blanc grows alongside Grenache Noir, Sangiovese and Merlot in deep Pinole Gravelly Loam soil offering an ideal balance of drainage and water retention. Perfect for organic viticulture without irrigation.

The Cellar

Drawing on Diego's experience with Carignan master Leon Barral in the Languedoc, the hand harvested, whole clusters are picked at more advanced maturity and about 5% at the bottom of the fermentor is crushed. The rest is incompletely foot crushed a little bit more every day. This results in a slow fermentation and maceration with very low extraction, Shaunt describes it as more 'infusion rather than extraction.' After 2 to 2.5 weeks the solids start to reabsorb some of the tannins and at 30 days they'll press. In order to give the yeast another shot at oxygen, they perform a single pumpover about 2/3rds of the way through the fermentation.

The base wines are racked before the successive harvest so they go into the second winter really clean. The wine is 'wound up real tight' as the ferment finishes and it isn't until the second winter in barrel that the fruit starts to reemerge. 18ppm sulfite was added after the completion of malolactic conversion but none was added at bottling.

For more details email info@OlmsteadWine.com

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