

Stoumen 'Nero d'Avola' 2019

Producer: Martha Stoumen

Provenance: NorCal

Farming: Organic

Grape(s): 100% Nero d'Avola

Vineyard(s):

75% Benson Ranch Vineyard - 14 year old dry farmed vines, gravelly loam soil

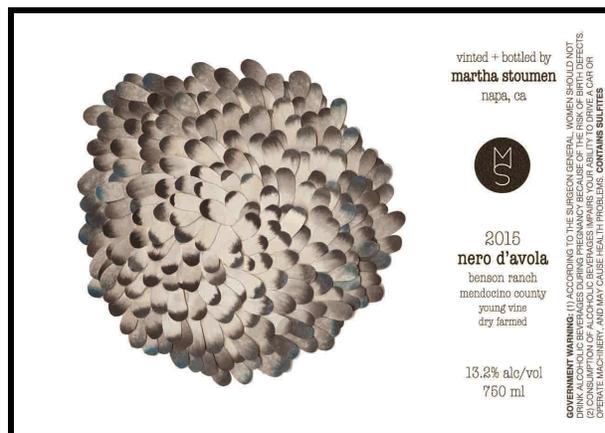
25% Fox Hill Vineyard - 33 year old vines (as far as we know the oldest Nero d'Avola in CA), sandy loam soils.

Vintage: "Really beautiful year in terms of weather" Martha tells us. Slow and steady, with a little ripening delay but not so much that harvest was compressed.

Fermentation/ Aging: Destemmed and fermented in concrete tank with gentle, daily pumpovers just to keep the cap wet. Pressed at dryness into barrels for 12 months aging on gross lees. Blended and racked back to barrel for an additional 6 months aging.

Fining/ Filtration: none.

Sulfite: 21 ppm sulfite total, 8 ppm free



The Producer:

Martha comes to wine from a broader passion for agriculture and the Italian language. Her path led her to a farm in Tuscany where the singular nature of the grape vine took hold. From there she headed to Sicily where she apprenticed under the great Giusto Occhipinti whose humanistic approach to clean viticulture forms the basis from which Martha evolves her own approach: "you're a human being, you know when fruit is ripe!"

Up until 2017 Martha was doing literally 100% of the work herself, producing 2,500 cases a year. With 2018's harvest she doubled her production, working in the shared space at Pax and has hired Tim Lyons as her assistant winemaker. She sources grapes from parcels she leases and farms herself as well as vineyards with multigenerational farmers working cleanly.

The Vineyard

The Nero d'Avola for her varietal bottling is sourced from three vineyards with complementary personalities.

75% of the fruit comes from Benson Ranch, a 5 acre site Martha has leased since 2015 and farms herself. The dry farmed, head trained vines were planted from cuttings from

Fox Hill in free draining sandy loam without the customary water retentive clay layer for the area so there's very low mildew pressure meaning very little need to apply sulfur. The Benson fruit carries a wilder level of acidity.

25% is sourced from Lowell Stone's iconic Fox Hill vineyard celebrated for its encyclopedic range of Italian and Portuguese varieties. The Fox Hill Nero d'Avola vines produce bigger berries with less acidity and more defined tannins, a nice contrast to Benson Ranch's raw acidity. This is the mother vineyard for both Benson Ranch and Chiarito Vineyard.

The Cellar

The grapes are destemmed and slowly fermented in concrete tanks with daily, gentle pumpovers in order to keep the cap moist. At dryness the wine is pressed into 10 year old barrel for 12 months on gross lees and then racked to blend. Barreled down again for another 6 months aging before bottling without fining or filtration.

Stoumen's barrel program was influenced by her time working at Broc: she looks for wineries that take the best care of their wood. Mostly sourcing from wineries she's worked with like Chalk Hill whose Chardonnay barrels she's fond of. Every month she'll taste and top up each barrel. If a particular barrel feels a little funky she may decide to add somewhere between 15-30 ppm sulfur. The only other sulfur addition will be made just before bottling. The decision is mostly based on taste and smell although she does factor pH into the decision.

For more details email info@OlmsteadWine.com

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