



IPO WINES

COUNTRY
USA

REGION
California

APPELLATION
San Luis Obispo County

SOIL TYPE
Loamy

VARIETAL(S)
100% Grenache

FARMING
Sustainable

WINEMAKER
John Alban



2020 Alban "Pandora"

IMPORTED BY IPO Wines

ABOUT THE PRODUCER

Starting in 1985, John Alban planted grapes for other people until he bought an estate in 1989. Alban Vineyards' is the first American winery and vineyard established exclusively for Rhone Varieties. Alban came to be a pioneer of the Rhone Rangers movement, and is considered one of the most influential American Rhone producers. Robert Parker's declared in The Wine Advocate that John Alban is "...the spiritual and qualitative leader of the movement..."

On beginning to grow Viognier, Alban stated "I almost single-handedly doubled the world's acreage," referring to a time when its cultivation was reduced to 50 acres (20 ha) in two areas of the Rhône Valley, Condrieu and Château-Grillet. Alban's work, along with that of Josh Jensen of Calera Wine Company in San Benito County, helped to significantly expand plantings of Viognier in California at a time when the varietal was near extinction.

WINE NOTES

At the very highest point on our ranch there is a unique and steep hillside. Over the course of 7 years, we slowly scratched terraces into this slope: a mix of pure white chalk laced with veins of fractured flint and sandstone. In the early years visiting winemakers went nuts when we showed them the site. Most were outraged when I told them we were planting Syrah and Grenache- at that time it sounded to them like we were putting a doormat on top of a silk rug. Times are changing.

Working this hillside, we struggle right along side the vines. These 10 acres of Syrah and Grenache make up Seymour's Vineyard. While the Syrah goes into a wine called Seymour's, the Grenache is the fruit for our Pandora.

In the myth, Pandora is the first woman- the Greek 'Eve'. She is fashioned out of clay and as you know, handed a vessel that she is instructed not to open. Of course, curiosity forces her to take a look. In that moment, all the challenges of the world are released- much like the effect of the apple in Eden. What is all too often overlooked is that Pandora shuts the vessel in time to retain one attribute: Hope. Naturally as the first woman, she is the source of all hope for mankind.

Pandora is a very feminine wine that we hope has advanced the end of the idea that some grapes are nobler than others; that Grenache is too paltry to be planted on premier vineyard sites. I am happy to say, that over the 30 years we have worked with Grenache, a generation has emerged that really doesn't even know there were once, so called, noble varieties. In our opinion, there are only noble wines.

Aromatic and exotic with smoked herbs, juvenile fresh red fruits, fennel, and wet crushed stones; dense and long. Aged 34 months in larger French containers of various ages after being fermented open to by its native yeasts. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

98-100 points, "The 2020 Pandora is cut from the same cloth yet brings even more richness. Kirsch liqueur, black cherries, blueberries, graphite, and peppery spice all soar from the glass, and it has full-bodied richness, chalky minerality, ripe tannins, and an awesome finish. This puppy has perfection written all over it." - Jeb Dunnuck