

This bottling Le Cigare Volant is identical to our *normale*, but, owing to its unorthodox *élevage*, quite different in its presentation. After a short tenure in barrel, assemblage, and completion of malolactic fermentation, the wine was removed to 5-gallon glass carboys (*bonbonnes*), where it reposed *sur lie* for 23 months. This yielded a rare degree of integration and complexity, plus a preternatural degree of savoriness. Our Flying Cigar is based on the traditional Southern Rhône style *encépagement*.

WINEMAKER NOTES

Winemaking, like life, is a bit of a dream. One imagined (some years ago) that one might produce a sort of *homage* to Châteauneuf-du-Pape, a Rhône-style blend in California, and somehow, miraculously, the wine materialized in this terrestrial sphere; it has been, in balance, a more or less viable, ongoing proposition. Over the years, I've had my ups and doons with the southern Rhône's most well known appellation. In general, I've not been so crazy about its escalating levels of over-extraction and ripeness, seemingly in commercial call and response to its most avid Marylandian partisan. With the exception of the redoubtable Château Rayas, I find that I can, at this juncture, largely take or leave C-du-P. But, possibly more to the point, I've come to realize that everything in my winemaking world has really been a displacement of my deep, secret desire to produce pinot noir, or more accurately, red Burgundy.¹

The idea of "raising" the wine in glass demijohns was also a bit of a fever dream, occasioned in part by the many hours I spent in deep contemplation of the mysteries of redox chemistry; there was something dream-like (*à la* Carlos Castaneda and Don Juan) about the many hours driving around southern France with Patrick Ducournau,² deep thinker about oxygen and wine.³ I've already written quite a bit about the nature of the esoteric *élevage en bonbonne*—*bâtonage magnetique*, etc., the opportunity for the wine to digest a substantial volume of yeast lees, and the extraordinary texture and savoriness this protocol engenders.

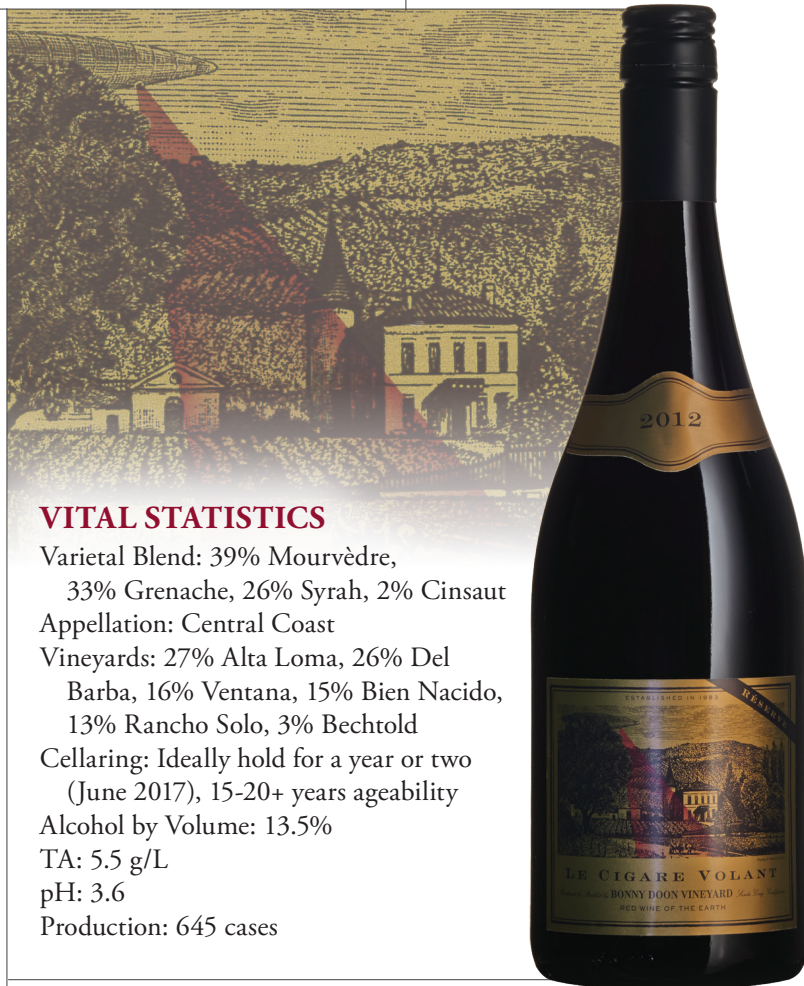
TASTING NOTES

Anaerobically cellared, *affiné* or "perfected" in 20 liter glass demijohns on its lees, this wine represents the peak of elegance in the eclectic Bonny Doon Vineyard range. Incredibly exotic, truffled/toasted almond, verging on coconut(!) nose, with the Platonic essence of drupe (or stone) fruit pulsing in the background. On the palate, very soft, plush tannins, great savoriness (of course), clean acidity and an endless finish. This is a wine that is built for the ages; there is seemingly still tons of fruit and a vibrant life-force to carry it for many years to come. The wine can be paired with any number of the usual suspects (game birds, lamb, venison), but maybe at its best with simpler fare (just cheese?), as a kind of (guided) meditation wine.

¹ The genius of great Burgundy is that it can be a seamless synthesis of Apollonian and Dionysian (well, maybe mostly Dionysian) elements—power, grace and sensuality. It defies all attempts at true characterization, evoking Margaret Cho's famous meditation on her own sexuality.

² Patrick had lost his driving license, so he was obliged to have someone drive him.

³ And inventor of *microbullage*, or micro-oxygenation.



VITAL STATISTICS

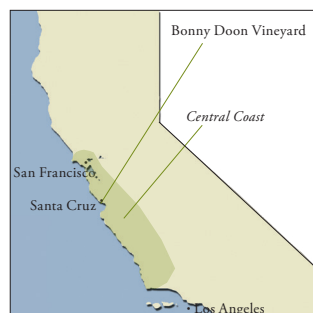
Varietal Blend: 39% Mourvèdre,
33% Grenache, 26% Syrah, 2% Cinsaut
Appellation: Central Coast
Vineyards: 27% Alta Loma, 26% Del
Barba, 16% Ventana, 15% Bien Nacido,
13% Rancho Solo, 3% Bechtold
Cellaring: Ideally hold for a year or two
(June 2017), 15-20+ years ageability
Alcohol by Volume: 13.5%
TA: 5.5 g/L
pH: 3.6
Production: 645 cases

INGREDIENTS

Grapes, sulfur dioxide, and tartaric acid.

In the winemaking process, the following were utilized: indigenous yeast, yeast nutrients, French oak chips, and copper sulfate.

REGION



WINEMAKER

Randall Grahm

