



IPO WINES

COUNTRY
USA

REGION
California

APPELLATION
San Luis Obispo County

SOIL TYPE
Sandy

VARIETAL(S)
100% Syrah

FARMING
Sustainable

WINEMAKER
John Alban



2019 Alban "Reva" Syrah

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

In the earliest years of Alban Vineyards, I lived in a rented green house propagating cuttings. When I wasn't making vines, I was busy looking for the future home for all the vines in my nursery. I spent 7 years looking at possible vineyard sites all over the Central Coast of California. Whenever I found a promising site, I negotiated a due diligence period during which I could do soil and site analysis. While mapping out the last piece I'd ever evaluate (because it was the one that turned into Alban Vineyards) I happened to name a little ridge on one part of the ranch 'Reva's Ridge'. It was a play on words incorporating the name of a Kentucky Derby winner: Riva's Ridge, and my mother's name which is Reva. Clearly I'd been in the sun too long and I will admit that I am a total 'mama's boy'. Years later, after calling the vineyard Reva and tagging the first barrel as Reva, I embraced the obvious: I named the wine Reva.

The grapes that go into Reva (97-100% Syrah with the balance Viognier) are from neutral sandy soils and portions of ranch that are chalky and quite alkaline. This combination makes for a wine with dark color, concentrated flavors of black fruits, fennel, and graphite. Perhaps the most distinguishing note of Reva is a unique iodine and oyster shell aromatic that is unlike anything in our other Syrahs. The wine is aged 3.5 years in barrels before bottling unfinned and unfiltered.

96+ points, "I tasted the 2019 Syrah Reva on July 8, shortly after its bottling in June. The 2019 is particularly elegant, with notable detail and vibrancy. "I've been more curious about the reaction of consumers to the 2019 Reva than I have in a long time," winemaker John Alban explains. "Will they like it? The Reva is very different in 2019." It's a touch aromatically coiled from its recent bottling, taking plenty of time and air to unfold scents of blackcurrants, peppermint patty, charcuterie, coffee beans and brown sugar. The full-bodied palate has a strong spine of refreshing acidity and plush, velvety tannins to balance its depth of flavor, and it offers a beautiful flourish of spice and floral tones that fan across the long finish. It's less ripe and hedonistic than in some vintages yet just as enjoyable! This will be released in the fall of 2023." - Wine Advocate

98 points, "Moving to the Syrahs, the 2019 Syrah Reva reveals a much cooler climate-like style in its blackberry, graphite, pepper, and bouquet garni-like nuances, and it picks up an almost Cornas-like game and white pepper character with time in the glass. Medium to full-bodied on the palate, it has a pure, layered, elegant mouthfeel, ripe yet polished tannins, and a great finish. It reminds me slightly of the 2018, although with slightly less concentration. It will evolve for 20-25 years." - Jeb Dunnuck