



"About the characteristics of the vintage I will say that 2013 (like 2012) was a very early vintage, which means ripe style but perhaps with more firm tannins. I think, the trap in 2013 was to make big, heavy wine, so I tried during the vinification (while still keeping the style of the vintage) to work more on the elegance, the balance instead of the power. I wanted to make sure this wine was "still pleasurable and drinkable" more than bodybuilding even though you will see it is a big baby! Enjoy my friends!"

- Stephan Asseo

## CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **95<sup>+</sup>**

Another blockbuster is the 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate. Incorporating 4% Petit Verdot, it offers telltale notes of currants, tobacco leaf, graphite and spring flower in its classic Cabernet style. Full-bodied and decidedly energetic and lively, with good acidity, it's another 2013 from Stephan that possesses a wallop of tannin in its structured, yet balanced and age-worthy profile. It should be at its best from 2018-2028+.

## FOR HER 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **94<sup>+</sup>**

A new cuvee that Stephan created for his wife (Pour Elle is French of For Her), the 2013 Pour Elle is a cofermented blend of 72% Syrah, 23% Mourvedre and the rest Viognier that was raised in 50% new French oak and 50% once used barrels. Beautiful on all counts, it has terrific notes of black and blue fruits, graphite, vanilla bean, peach pit and hints of violets on the nose. Full-bodied, fresh and still focused and structured on the palate, it has the expected density and ripeness of the estate paired with excellent overall purity and freshness. Give it a year or two and enjoy bottles through 2025.

## CHLOÉ 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **96**

From a single block of north-facing Syrah vines and a south-facing block of Grenache vines, the 2013 Cuvee Chloe (71% Syrah and 39% Grenache) is a big, ripe, voluptuous effort that firms up substantially on the palate, with lots of ripe tannin kicking in on the finish. Possessing plenty of black raspberry, graphite, spice-box, crushed flowers and dusty soil characteristics, give this concentrated, structured and balanced 2013 a year or three in the cellar and enjoy bottles through 2028.

## OPTIMUS 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **93**

The estate's entry-level wine that's always based on Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot, the 2013 Optimus offers lots of graphite, earth and peppery herbs to go with tons of red and black fruit characteristics. A full-bodied, rich and layered red that epitomizes Paso Robles, it has beautiful freshness, a silky texture and a great finish. Drink it anytime over the coming decade.

## ESTATE CUVÉE 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **97<sup>+</sup>**

The top wine of the estate and a blend that was the reason Stephan left Pomerol, the 2013 Estate Cuvee checks in as 43% Syrah, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Petit Verdot that comes all from his estate vineyard. It's locked and loaded with black and blue fruit, crushed rock, licorice and ground herbs, and I wrote that it seemed like it was filtered through a rocky riverbed in my notes. Serious, structured and tight, yet fabulously concentrated and pure, it needs 3-4 years of cellaring and will keep for two decades.

## CÔTE À CÔTE 2013

TASTING DATE - AUGUST 2015 RATING **96**

A blend of 40% Mourvedre, 30% Grenache and 30% Syrah, the 2013 Cote a Cote is a classic Rhone blend from Paso that has lots of blackberry, cassis, ground pepper and damp earth aromatics, full-bodied richness and both good acidity and tannic grip. Showing more complex floral characteristics and chalky minerality with time in the glass, it can be enjoyed now or cellared for a decade.