



ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS

CABERNET SAUVIGNON, SLD ESTATE, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT, NAPA VALLEY, 2009



ONE VINEYARD - TWO GRAPES

by Rob Sinskey

I think all my smart devices are making me dumb. These days, when I sit down to write, I get an irresistible urge to check Instagram for a “like” fix... It’s as though I’ve become a lab rat, choosing cocaine over food, but in this case it’s the instant gratification of a “like” response over the quiet satisfaction of the written word. Sometimes we’re better off with fewer choices... a simplified set of parameters that allow repetition and refinement. The modern world offers up so many options, it’s easy to be intrigued by the next shiny object, distracting us from the inherent beauty of what is and leaving us yearning for what could be.

RSV has a small piece of land behind the winery where, for the past twenty-five years, we’ve been growing Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. We farm it organically with biodynamic principles. All input choices are natural and revolve around cover crops, compost, or what’s left behind by the sheep. We have no reservoir, so the vineyard gets very little water. Here, there is no instant gratification, but a long term investment: we observe how each year imprints itself on the fruit as well as the finished wine and, if necessary, make adjustments for the current season and a mental note for next year’s improvements. On harvest day, the grapes will travel from the hill to the cellar where they are transformed from fruit to wine. Decisions are made based on observation, with a focus on expressing what is there... not someone else’s ideal of what a Napa wine should be, but what’s best for this piece of land and the unique weather of the vintage.

One vineyard, two grapes, and the same winemaker for twenty five years - these three things allow a rare degree of focus and a consistency to pursue a pure, distinct expression of Cabernet Sauvignon - a refined wine of simple elegance that is unlike any other “New World” wine. It’s a wine that deserves some attention.



Lately, if you don't like the weather in California, just wait a few days....

January through February of 2009 was quite dry with just 30% of normal rain fall. An early bud break was averted when the March Miracle took it up to 80% of normal precipitation. Another half inch of rain came in April, delaying bud break 10 days later than average.

RSV's SLD (Stags Leap District) Estate Vineyard is an amphitheater-like 4.5 acre property that is steeply sloped with lean, volcanic soils. The Cabernet Sauvignon vines face south-west and receive an abundance of heat and light. The early-ripening Merlot is toward the bottom of the property where it is somewhat protected from the sun for part of the day, allowing it to ripen later. Permanent cover crops keep the terraced soils in place and diffuse the reflected heat that bare soil would otherwise radiate. Water is limited in this region, so for all intents and purposes, the vineyard is dry farmed and usually produces less than 2 tons per acre.

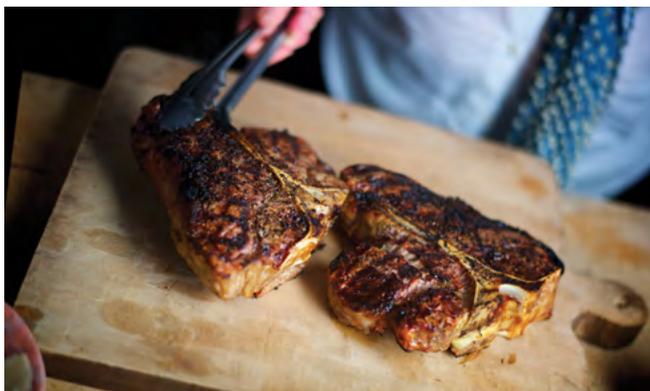
The Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were harvested on September 23... a date selected as the optimum intersection of ripeness, flavor, balance, and structure. This date seems early compared to modern Napa winemaking, but it has several advantages, the grapes have good natural acidity, they are not raisined, and the lower sugar equates to balanced, moderate alcohol levels. In addition, the grapes were harvested well before the damaging October rains. The RSV winemaking tradition of respect for the fruit is in full evidence. The use of oak is restrained and serves to frame and showcase the fruit without dominating it, allowing for the elegant terroir of the Stags Leap District to shine. The 2009 vintage will be one with those special wines that will continually improve and impress with time.

Tasting Notes

by Rob Sinskey

Elegant and refined, this wine has a quiet power that epitomizes the hallmarks of the Stags Leap District. Aromas and flavors of macerated black cherries, currants, and fresh berries backed by a cool dried herbal note and rich sweet earth. Quintessentially ripe with a nice mid-weight, the wine is full without being cloying. Elegant French oak frames the wine nicely with a touch of vanilla spice and a hint of toast. The wood marries well with the fruit and only reinforces the wine's elegant structure. This is a wine for the ages.





OLIVE OIL - A LOVE STORY

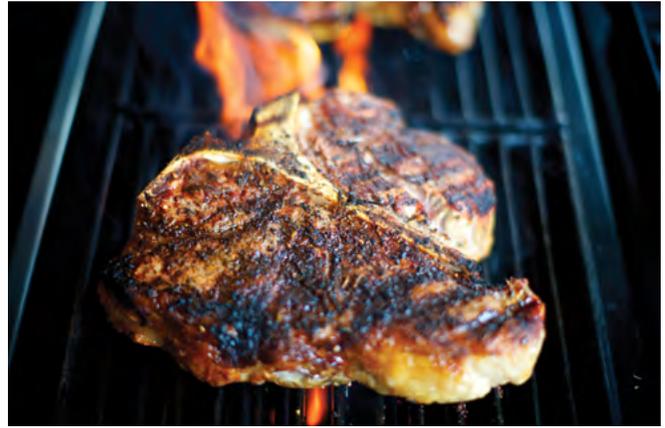
I grew up with olive oil. My mother kept a large silver and gold can of it in a cool, dark lower cupboard. I loved and craved the taste of it at an early age. I would dip soft chewy chunks of Italian bread into small bowls of oil for a snack. My mother would drizzle it on prosciutto and salami sandwiches, vegetables - raw and cooked, and grilled meat, fish, and poultry. Each time my mother was finished with the oil she would run her hand up the side of the can to capture the remains of the clinging oil and rub the precious drops into her hands to keep them soft. None of the oil went to waste.

I travelled to Italy early in my relationship with Rob and we stayed for a night at Tenuta di Capezzana, high in the Tuscan Hills. When I first tasted the Capezzana oil, I fell in love with it. It had a beautiful balanced acidity with a slight peppery note that caught me at the back of the throat. That evening, we dined on Bistecca grilled in the coals and drizzled with this beautiful oil. We drank lusty red wine with this simple and delicious meal as I fell deeper in love with the man that was to become my future husband. The oil remains a staple in my kitchen to this day. My daughters dip their bread in it as I did with my mother's olive oil. Each time I twist the cap off the bottle, memories of that evening at Capezzana come flooding back.

A rich, juicy grilled steak and Cabernet Sauvignon are a natural fit. The graceful cassis and black berry fruit, combined with underpinnings of graphite, dried woody herbs, and a hint of cedar and spice from fine French oak, makes RSV Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon a mighty match for a meal of steak and potatoes. The wine is sleek from balanced acidity, and possesses just enough ripe, well-managed tannin to support the fruit. The result is a slinky, sexy Cabernet with a long, lingering, savory finish. A high quality extra virgin olive oil forms a bridge between the pepper crusted steak and the wine, making it a rare and delicious match. Don't skimp on the oil or the wine.

Until the Next Wine....

Maria



GRILLED PORTERHOUSE STEAK WITH ARUGULA AND PARMESAN

As much as I try to eat my vegetables, I can't help but crave a thick juicy steak every now and then. When I do, I procure the highest quality meat. Serves 6 to 8

1 tablespoon cracked black peppercorns	2 2-inch thick cut porterhouse steaks (about 4.5 pounds)
1 tablespoon kosher salt	Fleur de sel or similar flaked sea salt
2 tablespoons fresh rosemary leaves, crushed to release oils	4 cups arugula
6 large garlic cloves, unpeeled, smashed	3 lemons halved
Extra virgin olive oil	Shaved Parmesan

1. In a small bowl mix together the peppercorns, salt, rosemary, garlic and 2 tablespoons of olive to make a paste.
2. Place the steaks in a non-reactive dish. Rub paste evenly over both sides of each steak. Let marinate at room temperature for 1 hour or overnight in the refrigerator.
Let steaks come to room temperature for 1 hour before grilling. Brush off garlic to prevent it from burning when you grill the steaks.
3. Heat the grill to high.
4. Sear steaks for 5 to 6 minutes on each side. Reduce the grill heat to medium high and grill an additional 5 to 6 to minutes per side for medium rare/medium. Rub the lemon halves with olive oil and grill along side the steaks until golden. Place the steaks on a plate and rest for 20 minutes to allow juices to settle.
5. Slice the tenderloin and loin off the bone and then slice steaks about 1/4 inch thick. Fan slices on a serving plate. Drizzle steak with extra virgin olive oil and a squeeze of grilled lemon. Sprinkle slices lightly with sea salt. Sprinkle Arugula over and drizzle with more olive oil. Shave Parmesan over all. Arugula can also be served on the side. Serve the bones and potatoes on the side.

GOLDEN EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL AND SEA SALT POTATOES

The flavor of the olive oil really shines against the backdrop of potatoes with a crisp, golden exterior and light fluffy interior. Some say extra virgin olive oil is wasted in cooking but I love the flavor that a good extra virgin imparts. Some of the more delicate volatile aromas and flavors may cook off but the ones that remain are far superior and more desirable than the lack of flavor from a bland oil. Serves 6 to 8

3 pounds large Yukon Gold or similar potato	Extra virgin olive oil
Kosher Salt	Sea salt

1. Peel potatoes and cut into 2-inch chunks.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Season the water with kosher salt so it is lightly salty. Boil potatoes 12 minutes until just tender.
3. Drain the potatoes in a colander until very dry but still hot.
4. Heat a large 12-inch heavy bottomed sauté pan over medium high heat. When pan is hot, add 1/4 cup olive oil and then the potatoes. Sauté until golden on all sides, turning as each side becomes golden. Add more olive oil to the pan if it gets too dry. Break off a piece of potato to taste salt level. Season to taste with sea salt.
5. Turn the potatoes onto a serving plate. Drizzle with additional oil if desired and serve.



FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

Robert Sinskey Vineyards
6320 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA 94558
707.944.9090
robertsinskey.com

Winemaker: Jeff Virnig
Chef: Maria Helm Sinskey
Photos and Text: Rob Sinskey
Vineyard Manager: Debby Zygielbaum
gluttons@robertsinskey.com

