

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS



Abraxas

VIN DE TERROIR, SCINTILLA SONOMA VINEYARD, LOS CARNEROS, 2011



- Organic - CCOF Certified Vineyards
- Biodynamic - Demeter Certified Vineyards
- Grown in RSV's Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard
- 2011 Cuveé: 41% Riesling, 28% Pinot Gris, 23% Pinot Blanc, 8% Gewürztraminer
- Delicate whole-cluster pressed fruit
- Fermented dry
- No barrels for a bright, pure and true wine
- Elegant glass stoppered 750ml bottles
- Cork finished magnums

TA: 6.3 g/l pH: 3.43 Alc: 13.1%

ABRAXAS - THE WINE

"Our very nature is distinctiveness. If we are not true to this nature we do not distinguish ourselves enough. Therefore must we make distinctions of qualities."

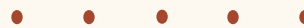
-Carl Jung

What if, instead of pursuing an ideal by means of alteration and manipulation, we embrace the unique qualities that come from the interaction of place, weather and grape, to create something that is distinctive instead of another "perfect" California wine?

Abraxas is a salute to distinctiveness and a reaction against homogeneity. Born of the idea that four classic grapes of Alsace (Pinot Gris, Riesling, Gewurztraminer and Pinot Blanc), planted in RSV's Organic and Biodynamic Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard, would respond distinctly to the unique weather patterns of each year. Then, the four varieties could be blended, in ratios determined by each variety's unique response to the vintage, making the wine whole while avoiding the manipulations often found in a more industrialized cellar. Abraxas does not aspire to be anything but true to vintage.

Three hundred and sixty-five days shape Abraxas. It's even in the name itself. If you apply isopsephy (the Grecian

practice of adding up the number values of the letters in a word) to the Greek letters of Abraxas, ΑΒΡΑΞΑΞ (Α=1, Β=2, Ρ=100, Α=1, Ξ=200, Α=1, Ξ=60) the sum is 365. In ancient times, the Gnostic Basilideans believed that Abraxas ruled the 365 heavens, each one with its lesser god and a virtue for every day of the year. In later years, the name morphed into the magic word, Abracadabra. It seems appropriate, as we feel this wine is pretty magical.



TASTING NOTES

Abraxas vibrates with life. It is a pure, true and honest representation of the cool 2011 vintage from RSV's organic and Biodynamic Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard. The wine has vibrant and bright notes of lime, Asian pear, lychee and mineral with a beautiful mid-palate weight that sings with a broad range of cuisine. It works with challenging foods like asparagus, yet is the perfect foil for shellfish, pork and even a simply cooked joint of beef. It is hard to fail with this well balanced wine... fish tacos, check! Cheese, check! Pad Thai, check! Yellow curry, check! Provençal lamb, check! A nice dinner companion ... that's up to you.

FINE WINES FROM ORGANIC VINES

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THE NATURE OF DISTINCTIVENESS...



EMBRACING FLAWS IN ALL THEIR PERFECTION

I had a lucid dream last night. Even though I knew I was dreaming, it was too beautiful to interrupt, so I willed it to keep going... then I realized, I was resolving a ponderous problem.

My nocturnal movie of the mind projected a stunning image of a rocky landscape in glorious color. It could have been the Garden of the Gods, Yosemite or King's Canyon - the place did not matter as much as the subject. The stone cliffs, illuminated by a brilliant golden light as the sun set, emphasized every remnant of mountain building: thick upturned layers of sedimentary rock formed patterns punctuated by glacially arranged igneous boulders, all set off by pools of eroded rubble. Together these lines, colors and shapes formed a majestic, natural mosaic.

In the foreground of this natural formation was the top of a man made structure, perhaps a hotel or lodge. It too was made of stone and beautifully set off in the golden light, and it was perfect ... almost too perfect. Each stone was cut and placed to form exact rectangles with mortar defining the outline of each stone.

The contrast could not have been more apparent. The natural mountain structure had a randomness that could not be recreated in a manufactured structure... there were imperfections and danger in the cracks and teetering boulders. The sedimentary rocks had bands of color that a sane designer would never conceive. Though static, it was exciting. There was no real way to compare the two. The natural had an awe inspiring beauty that the detail oriented, perfect structure could never have.

Carl Jung, the father of analytical psychology, would have had fun with this dream. Perhaps he would have perceived the natural scene as the imperfections that define our distinctiveness as humans, and the building as the folly of pursuing an ideal to the detriment of uniqueness. The dogged pursuit of extremes causes us to miss the subtle shades that would otherwise create distinctions. Instead of accepting that there are degrees of beauty and ugliness or good and evil in everything, we have a tendency to move too far in one direction, inadvertently conjuring the other.

"When we strive after the good or the beautiful, we thereby forget our own nature, which is distinctiveness... We labor to attain the good and the beautiful, yet at the same time we also lay hold of the evil and the ugly..."

Jung believed that by chasing an ideal, we blind ourselves to our true nature, which is distinctiveness - a complex array of contradictory notions. Ultimately, by denying our natural state, we dilute our effectiveness and succumb to bland sameness.

"Hence the natural striving of the creature goeth towards distinctiveness, fighteth against primeval, perilous sameness."

Carl Jung wrote these words in 1916 in a piece he credited to the Gnostic philosopher Basilides, called Seven Sermons to the Dead. During this time he introduced the concept of Abraxas as the essence of everything.

"Hard to know is the deity of Abraxas. Its power is the greatest, because man perceiveth it not. From the sun he draweth the summum bonum; from the devil the infimum malum: but from Abraxas LIFE, altogether indefinite, the mother of good and evil."

In Abraxas, beauty co-mingles with the repulsive in an attempt to illuminate the dichotomy that is within all living things.

"Wherefore is Abraxas terrible. It is splendid as the lion in the instant he striketh down his victim... To fear it, is wisdom. To resist it not, is redemption."

Abraxas is our true nature that we have ineffectively tried to control. The beauty is in our natural state. It is neither wholly good nor bad, it just is and by embracing the contradictions, we find our way by accepting our distinctiveness... including flaws that make the living perfect in their imperfection.

"It is the delight of the earth and the cruelty of the heavens... It is the operation of distinctiveness."

WINEGROWING NOTES

The slogan for 2011 was: "Twice the work for half as much!" Spring rains came right when the whites and Pinot Noir were flowering, causing several challenges: a small fruit set, reemergence of cover crops and vigorous canopy growth.

All the early rain meant lots of extra handwork. Leaf pulling became an art, encouraging air circulation without exposing the delicate grapes to potential sunburn late in the season. Then, there was the vigorous cover crop. Even our gluttonous sheep couldn't keep up with it, requiring us to mow again and again. Yes, we could have sprayed herbicides to save a buck or two, but that's not our style - and we have to live with ourselves.

The growing season was long and cool for excellent whites, particularly if you prefer a more European style with mouth-watering acidity and laser focus. The only downside is that the crop was down almost 40%. We apologize if we don't have enough to go around, but Mother Nature created the allocations this year.

-Rob Sinskey