

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS



Pinot Gris Late, Los Carneros, 2012



- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Grown in two of RSV's Los Carneros Vineyards in Napa & Sonoma
- Delicate whole-cluster pressed fruit
- Harvest Sugar: 27.7° Brix
- Residual Sugar: 12.5° Brix

Winegrowing Notes

The RSV Pinot Gris Late is a chimera. It only appears when the conditions are right... and they were right in 2012. A nice, long growing season with late ripening weather helped push the Brix over 27 degrees. For reference, a normal dry wine is picked between 22.5 and 24.

Pinot Gris from two of RSV's CCOF certified vineyards, The Three Amigos (Amigo 2 to be precise) and the Scintilla Sonoma Vineyards went into this wine. The Three Amigos Vineyard lent a vibrant citrus component with beautiful structure and crisp acidity whereas the fruit from the Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard enriched the mid-palate with lovely pear and melon characteristics. The late growing season allowed a touch of the noble rot, botrytis, to take hold, imparting a pleasant nuttiness to the mix.

Tasting Notes

RSV's Pinot Gris Late hits the "sweet spot" with its gold-i-locks, straw-gold hue and "just right" delicate sweetness balanced by crisp acidity. It has aromas and flavors of crystalized ginger, citrus, ripe pear and peach-like stone fruit... followed by a nutty note of almond. This off dry wine is not just for dessert but can be served with the cheese course, and it really shines with not-too-sweet fruit based desserts like wine poached pears or nut tarts. It makes for a happy ending to any meal.

A Touch of Sweet - by Maria Helm Sinskey

As I take my first sip of Pinot Gris Late, dessert isn't the first thing that springs into my mind. The wine's slight kiss of residual sugar brings out the pear and spice notes of the grape and also a touch of almond-like nuttiness. So instead of saving it exclusively for dessert, try it with a salty blue or a funky washed rind St. Nectare. This ethereally sweet wine balances nicely between savory and sweet. It makes a fitting end to any meal or as an afternoon aperitif. Whether you enjoy it with something savory or sweet, the first sip will have you going back for more.

Visit www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen for the ***Oatmeal Biscuit*** recipe and other tempting originals by Maria Helm Sinskey.

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You know it when you find the sweet spot. It just feels right. Like hitting a tennis ball in the center of the racket as it makes that perfect “pop” sound or swinging the bat as it meets the ball with a “thwack!” Or accelerating out of the apex of a turn in a way that puts a smile on your face - and elicits screams from your passengers.

The first known use of the phrase “sweet spot” was in the 1883 novel “Treasure Island” by Robert Louis Stevenson when John Silver states: “this here is a sweet spot, this island — a sweet spot for a lad to get ashore on. You’ll bathe, and you’ll climb trees, and you’ll hunt goats... Why, it makes me young again.”

Ah, but in 1883 “sweet” was still a luxury and the very word connoted visions of ease... the sweet life. Sugar was rare in the pre-20th century world, but even so, we craved it. We learned as hunter gatherers that sweet fruit provided instant energy and if it was that good, what if we concentrated the sugar in that fruit by drying it, or juicing it? Yum! Later, during the very beginnings of agriculture, we learned how to ferment the sugar of grapes to create a beverage for the heart and soul. Even later, in the northern reaches of the grape growing zones, the fruit would freeze on the vine and those industrious vigneronns would pick the frozen fruit, press the concentrated sugar nectar from the grapes, and make a wine that both warmed the soul and sweetened the disposition... a dessert wine that had happy levels of sugar and moderately low alcohols balanced by good acidity.

The sweet spot of the past was a wine that captured the essence of perfectly ripened fruit, fruit that would have been stolen by birds or animals before humans would have been able to harvest

or would have rotted before making it to market. It preserved the fruit character at its apex of ripeness.

But now sugar is cheap and commonplace. Most of us were weaned on sugared drinks and snacks. Every coffee house has jars of sugar on counters, spoonfuls of which are free for the taking. Our sugar meters are calibrated differently than our forebears and, unfortunately, more of it is needed to impress. So, if excess is what impresses, where is the sweet spot today?

I will confess that the first time I tried a “super sticky” dessert wine, I was impressed. The sweetness knocked my socks off. But as I tasted more and more sweet wines, I found that high amounts of sugar alone no longer satisfied. What I wanted was balance, something that tasted like ripe, crisp fruit...

There is a point in the cycle of a growing season when the vine no longer supports the ripening of the grape. It shuts down and the only thing that is occurring is dehydration or rot, hopefully the noble kind, removing water and concentrating sugar. However, what is being lost is acid and it is acid that makes a wine crisp and refreshing... even a sweet wine.

So, in my contradictory world, the sweet spot is more ethereal... it is the intersection of physiological and sugar ripeness... a point of libration as sweet is balanced by crisp acidity. Like biting into an optimally ripened crisp apple or peach right from the tree on a cold fall morning. This is my ideal sweet spot.

