

MARCIEN

LOS CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY, 2008

Grown, Produced, and Bottled by Robert Sinskey Vineyards



- Marcien represents the best of vintage and vineyards
- A "Right Bank" of Napa wine, a Saint-Émilion with a suntan!
- The Three classics: Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon from RSV's Vandal, OSR, and Three Amigos Vineyards
- CCOF Organic and Demeter Biodynamic certified vineyards
- Cave aged 18 months in 35% new French oak barrels
- Bottle aged an additional 3+ years in the RSV cellar before release
- The equivalent of 450 cases produced in 6x750ml packs
- Bottled in 750ml, 1.5L, 3L, and 6L
- An elegant, subtle, and well balanced wine.

WINE GROWING NOTES

Marcien c. 1386, "Of the planet Mars" or from 1883, "an inhabitant of the planet Mars."

Years ago, our neighbors thought we were crazy to plant Cabernet Franc in the Northern Carneros region. They said it was not warm enough - that we would have to let it get super ripe in order for the grape to shed its herbaceous character. They could not have gotten it more wrong. Both Cabernet Franc and Merlot are relatively early ripening varieties, so they are more in sync with the cool Carneros climate, allowing a long growing season for flavor development yet relatively low sugars for moderate alcohol and balanced acidity.

We continue to move forward with these classic "Right Bank" varieties of Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon, selecting the ideal sites within our vineyards for these three elegant varieties... because they are in balance with the region.

RSV's organically and Biodynamically grown "Right Bank" of Napa wine might as well be from Mars... an

elegant alien amongst over-the-top natives. Maybe it's best described as the bridge between Old and New Worlds; a Saint-Émilion with a suntan!

Marcien is blended purely by taste and texture to create the most expressive wine from a given year. Marcien is RSV's best effort from the vintage and the vineyards.

WINE TASTING NOTES

Rich yet bright, this wine has an out of this (New) world character of plum, blackberry, and cassis with a complex undercurrent of bay leaf, bramble, and dark bitter sweet chocolate. As the wine airs in the glass, subtle notes of cinnamon, clove, and citrus zest appear. This wine, no wimpy Californian, has a firm core of tannin and bright, mouth watering acidity to balance the rich fruit. This vintage of Marcien is a graceful, age-worthy wine.

FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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Another Perfect Day in Hell!

Your idea of perfection might very well be my idea of hell... maybe perfection is hell! We think we want things perfect and we spend our lives making "it" better, more beautiful, easier, faster... but what we really want is distinctiveness. Don't get me wrong, we enjoy the pursuit of an ideal but, more often than not, once we've achieved a perception of perfection we're rarely satisfied and find ourselves in need of new challenges - even if it means that we must ignore or reverse the advances we've already made.

The pursuit of perfection in fine wine is a prime example of something that, when taken too far, has unintended consequences. Achieving ripeness was historically the goal of fine wine. A benchmark "vintage" wine could only be created from a relatively warm year. But as knowledge and technology intervened to make things more consistent in the less than optimal vintages, we began to see wines that were so good you couldn't finish the glass - ripe, rich, and high in alcohol. This style may be someone's idea of perfection but when wines from different regions all taste the same, they become like the Stepford Wives... creepy in their perfection.

It's a counterintuitive idea but all the little technological steps taken to create a perfect wine has led to the blanding of a whole category of aspirational beverages. Clones were bred to ripen earlier, sugar up, and shed some acidity before the fall rains came. Viruses and diseases were controlled resulting in more vigorous vines. Sorting tables were employed to remove any less than ideal grapes, leaving only the most "perfectly" ripened examples for the fermenter. All of these things and more were done to create a riper, richer, sweeter style of wine. And, for a while, it worked. These richer wines stood out in blind tastings against leaner, more subtle entrants and were rewarded with high scores, creating an arms race for the "perfect" 100 point wine.

In the pursuit of perfection we lost something in the form of character and balance. Wines from

around the world became perfectly boring with a rich, sweet flavor profile.

Balance is elusive. Most people respond to things that stand out, especially in a blind tasting. Balance becomes even more important at the dinner table. Every great chef knows that certain sweet or rich foods need acidity to balance the richness, either by adding it to the dish in the form of citrus, vinegar, or wine, or balancing it with a bright wine on the table. If there is no relief, the richness will keep building until it overwhelms the palate.

Balance is a hot topic for wine writers, sommeliers, and winemakers. Most of the discussion centers on picking grapes earlier for lower sugar, lower alcohol, and higher acidity. But this is only part of the equation - just picking earlier creates wines with the flavor profile of underripe fruit. Every grape variety, every selection or clone, has a predestined ripening cycle. Some are early ripening, some are not. Those that do are more suited to a cooler climate because in warmer situations they often sugar up before achieving flavor ripeness. Many of these earlier ripening selections were chosen for warm climates in the 80s and 90s because vineyard owners were rewarded with accolades for a riper style. Just picking these selections earlier will give you a wine with the right amount of sugar for moderate alcohols and perhaps decent acidity, but they will lack flavor. In this case, the variety, clone, or selection is out of sync (or balance) with the climate. The trick is to find the right selection for the place so the grapes can achieve flavor (physiological) ripeness by the time the grapes sugar up. This is a generational concept that (unless you have lots of history in an area) requires time and experimentation.

RSV has been in the pursuit of balance for over thirty years - even when balance was not in vogue - ignoring the hustling devil on our shoulder with his promises of fame and fortune and choosing instead to heed the advice of the angel of restraint.