

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS



PINOT NOIR, LOS CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY, 2012



- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- 100% Pinot Noir
- Heirloom Selections and French Clones
- 32 Separately Harvested and Vinified Lots
- From All Five of RSV's Los Carneros Vineyards
- Cave Aged 10 Months in French Oak
- 30% New Barrels for Subtlety
- 380 Barrels Produced
- Bottled in 375ml and 750ml formats

WINE GROWING NOTES

The antithesis of 2011, 2012 was one of the driest winters on record and was only saved by a "March Miracle" spring rain. When the clouds cleared, the groundwork was laid for near perfect flowering conditions. The exceptional growing season culminated in just about perfect ripening weather for great concentration and flavor development at lower alcohols.

RSV's five different organically farmed vineyards in the Carneros region produced impeccable fruit from both heirloom selections and French clones. The well-paced harvest season allowed time to pick each block within each vineyard at optimal flavor development while maintaining bright acidity. Each block was harvested at night and brought into the cellar at dawn. Destemmed, it either went into small, open top fermenters and hand punched or into stainless steel tanks and cap irrigated. Most lots fermented on ferrel yeast. Once each lot achieved dryness, it was put to bed in new to three year old French oak barrels and aged in the RSV caves for one year before bottling.

WINE TASTING NOTES

The 2012 vintage created wines that are as close to perfect as we have ever seen. The translucent, ruby red color triggers symptoms of synesthesia as you think you can almost smell or taste the wine just by looking at its vibrant color. Aromas and flavors of cranberry and raspberry are followed by a cinnamon spice and a touch of bramble. The wine is vibrant, almost nervy as the flavors explode across the palate for a nice, long, mouthwatering finish.

INTERPLAY - by Maria Helm Sinskey

The 2012 Los Carneros Pinot Noir is ethereal. It has the beautiful red berry perfume of well-crafted and complex Pinot Noir with a long mouthwatering finish. This savory and rich meat pie is a delicious twist on a traditional Turkish Borek and plays off the imagined sweetness of the wine. Not sweet as in sugar but sweet as in fragrance. The hint of sweetness from the currants further plays into the sweet savory interplay of wine and torta. A delicious display of why RSV's Pinot Noir continues to happily exist at the dinner table.

Visit www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen for the Savory Filo Torta recipe and other tempting originals by Maria Helm Sinskey.

FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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Wonderful, Glorious!

I never thought Pinot Noir would achieve the mainstream success it enjoys today. When we first planted Pinot Noir in our Carneros vineyards almost thirty five years ago, it just seemed an unlikely candidate for mass appeal because the great, or even good ones, were just too few and far between. It was, and still is, a finicky grape, but then it was mostly grown in marginal regions that only achieved what we would consider full ripeness one or two out of ten vintages. This meant that most vintages resulted in wines that only a quirky palate could love. It was a wine for the few, the proud, the geeks.

Once upon a time, people with names like Kermit and Wasserman took quixotic walkabouts in search of good Pinot Noir. Wandering through little villages of Burgundy, they knocked on cellar doors to find elegant, enthralling, or just drinkable wines. They were on a mission to find Pinots for a tiny audience that included Berkeley and New York professors, inspired chefs, hippies, beats, and freaks. People who probably had difficulty pronouncing the names on the labels but were willing to wade through ten bottles of mediocrity to find one bottle of enlightenment.

The rugged vigneron of Burgundy made wines of their region, for tables adorned with foods that they either raised, killed, or made. These were wines made by farmers with no delusions of grandeur. There were no magazines to tout hundred point wines, instead wine merchants roamed the land, tasted and invested their own money to share their passion with stateside chefs and adventurous consumers.

There was a romance to these wines that allowed them to succeed even though some were funky. People confused cellar taint and *brettanomyces* with terroir and assumed the wines were supposed to be earthy, leathery, and funky. I remember more than once watching a Maynard G. Krebs-like character sit in the corner of the room at a party, both hands clasped around a glass (instead of bongos) chanting in hushed, reverent tones that "When this wine opens up, it will be wonderful... glorious!" The wines had nothing if they didn't have character and characters were the only ones patient enough to put up with the eccentricities of the wines themselves.

There was a reason Pinot Noir was the geek's wine. The Pinots of the day were on the razor's edge of ripeness - almost like a white wine with bright acidity, delicate tannin, and cranberry and strawberry fruit. They had a flavor profile too fragile to attract a mass audience. A good percentage of the population were unable or unaccustomed to perceiving the complexities of the understated fruit.

Then the excesses of the 90's changed everything. The public embraced the hundred point scale and winemakers became more adept in the science of wine. Pinot Noir went from one in ten being drinkable to all ten drinkable, five with high scores but, in my opinion, too big and oaky, three thin and stemmy, and finally two elegant, delicate and complex wines. Burgundy was no longer the sole realm of acclaimed Pinot Noir as the New World regions of California, Oregon, and New Zealand defined a new fruit-driven style of wine.

Pinot Noir may have hit the big time, but the great ones are still what the geeks seek - the rare, elegant creature of subtlety and finesse that always makes for a great dinner companion... and then, once it opens, it will be wonderful... glorious!

