

# ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS



## *Vin Gris of Pinot Noir*

LOS CARNEROS, 2014



- 100% RSV Grown Carneros Pinot Noir
- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Whole-cluster pressed, never saignée
- Free Run - No skin, seed or stem contact during fermentation
- Pure - Never blended for color
- Produced in small batches since 1991
- Limited production, yields determine quantity

### WINE GROWING NOTES

Drought has pluses and minuses when it comes to growing grapes. The negative being lack of water, of course, which cause a stressed vine to shut down early, weaken its immune system, allow opportunistic disease or pestilence and/or lead to smaller crops. But if the farm is managed correctly, a drought year can also offer more intensity of flavor and aromatics in the finished wine.

RSV farms all of its vineyards organically. This style of farming is not only an ideal but a practice that leads to more stress tolerant vines. The idea is simple: create an environment where the vine can access the nutrients it needs in the soil over time. Thus, the vine grows slow and steady instead of rushing to catch up in growth when synthetic fertilizers are added. This natural farming technique results in a less vigorous vine that can withstand extremes. The soil itself is also more resilient, rich in microorganisms, the humus spongy with life, absorbing and holding more moisture than chemically-treated, clean-

farmed land. Like a layer of fat, this humus acts as life support when the water runs out.

The vintage of 2014 was the third year of drought. RSV's Carneros Estate vineyards produced a slightly smaller crop (when compared to the prior two vintages) of Pinot Noir that had smaller berries and slightly thicker skins. Though the year was dry, the growing season was long and cool. This led to more intensity of flavor, effusive aromatics, and elegant structure.

### WINE TASTING NOTES

This Vin Gris of Pinot Noir has a luminosity that cannot be pinned down with one or two descriptors. It's vibrant and luscious with aromatics and flavors of wild strawberry and peach skin. The wine is a perfect foil for all types of food both serious and frivolous. Take on a picnic or present at the table. This wine is delicious.

### FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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**Ready to Rumble**

It has been building for years, like a snowball rolling down a hill, it's been picking up momentum, getting bigger, faster and now, the pink crush is upon us.

In Europe, pink wine has traditionally been the wine of the masses. Most are non-cerebral, pleasure-inducing quaffers designed to go with lunch, sipped while preparing dinner, enjoyed with charcuterie and cheese or taken on picnics - but a few are more serious. These wines are farmed meticulously with lower yields and crafted intentionally to have better aromatics and "bones" for a great mouthfeel.

The New World took a different trajectory with pink wine. The early ones were plonk. Some were blends of white and red grapes, others salvaged from the bleeding of red juice at the beginning of fermentation, while still others were invented by necessity when a vintner had an excess of red grapes and accidentally made an off-dry (sweet!) White Zin that almost took over the pink world. Made to be cash flow wines, these Pinks all had low price in common. They were great in that they saved some vineyards from being ripped up, but they also tarnished the reputation of rosé.

It's been almost 25 years since RSV started making a Vin Gris of Pinot Noir from our Carneros vineyards. It was meant to be a counterpoint to the popular sweet pink wines. Back then we couldn't give the wine away because most high-end restaurateurs were concerned their customers would think anything with a pink tint was low class and sweet. Finally, some self-confident chefs starting rallying behind it. One of the first was Chef Jonathan Waxman, then of Table 29 in Napa and now of Barbuto in NYC. He got behind the pink and made it cool again. Before long, other chefs got with the program.

Fast forward to the present: there is no more fear of pink. Many people drinking rosé today weren't even born when the White Zin craze peaked. A glass of pink no longer carries negative connotations... and the modern winemaker has no fear to make great artisanal rosé. We are now in a renaissance of Pink... so many that we are beginning to see Pink-Offs, competitions pitting one pink wine against another. Unfortunately, competitions tend to emphasize the wrong characteristics in wine, favoring extraction, power, or residual sugar over elegance and finesse. We try to stay out of that game.

But, there is one late night pink event that we endorse... every year around the James Beard awards, our old friend of the pink libation, Chef Jonathan Waxman, throws a party he calls the Rosé Bowl where food and wine professionals get together to eat great food and wash it all down with elegant, well balanced rosé... and one very familiar Vin Gris of Pinot Noir.

**EXCEPTIONAL PINK - by Maria Helm Sinskey**

RSV's Vin Gris IS something special. Gently whole-cluster pressing RSV's estate grown organic pinot noir grapes brings out the most delicate and aromatic nuances of pinot noir without over-extracting the color... a rarity in this heyday of rosé. It goes beautifully with the bitter greens, juicy fruit, and salty cheese in this salad, or enjoy it on its own as an aperitif. It will be hard to drink just one bottle, so grab a couple and drink up while you can.

Visit [www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen](http://www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen) for the *Escarole, Treviso and Endive Salad with Blood Orange, Shaved Sheep's Milk Cheese and Toasted Pine Nuts* recipe and other tempting originals by Maria Helm Sinskey.

