

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS



Abraxas

VIN DE TERROIR, SCINTILLA SONOMA VINEYARD, 2014



- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Grown in RSV's Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard
- Delicate whole-cluster pressed fruit
- Fermented dry
- No barrels for a bright, pure and true wine
- Elegant glass stoppered 750ml bottles
- Cork finished magnums

Winegrowing Notes

One year, one vineyard, four grapes - Abraxas is always greater than the sum of its parts. Each vintage presents itself in a unique way - hot, cold, fog, sun, wind, rain and drought. A vintage is the upbringing that imprints character on the grapes but, like siblings, each grape variety responds differently to the stimulus of the vintage. Gewürztraminer wants to ripen first and Riesling last. It can be almost a month between the two, and a lot can happen in thirty days.

Each variety, Riesling, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and Gewürztraminer, responds differently to each vintage and, by taking the good with the bad, we can make a wine of character - a wine that is a pure expression of place and vintage.

2014 was the earthquake vintage as we discovered faults running through three of RSV's vineyards after the Napa Earthquake in August of that year. Rain totals from July 1st, 2013 to January 30th, 2014 were 2 inches, 15% of normal. An average year would have been 13 inches. From February 4th to March 3rd, 2014 we received about 8 to 10 inches putting the season at about 50% of average for the year. These spring rains helped fill ponds and the soil profile for the season. The harvest started with Gewürztraminer on August 18th, three days ahead of 2013 and 14 days ahead of 2012. Riesling was the last to be picked on September 9th.

Night harvest and whole cluster pressing preserved the beautiful fruit. The individual lots were cold fermented and the final cuvée is 43% Riesling, 29% Pinot Blanc, 17% Pinot Gris, and 11% Gewürztraminer.

Tasting Notes - by Rob Sinskey & Jeff Virnig

Besides earthquake and drought, the 2014 was a beautiful vintage. The berries were gorgeous, thicker skinned, more intensely flavored and perfumed than the prior two vintages. The wine has crisp acidity, and low pH which would suggest it will continue to evolve for long term interest.

Honeysuckle, lilac, lychee, almond and white pepper aromas, backed by an exotic kaffir lime citrusy note, claims this wine's place as a true aromatic. The palate is vibrant with crisp, mouthwatering acidity with notes of pear, almond, pineapple and green apple with a firm mineral backbone. This wine is delicious with both haute cuisine and comfort food. The big surprise will be in how well this wine ages.

FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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from the land of good and evil!

It's hard to do simple. Counterintuitive, isn't it? I don't know why, but almost every time someone tries to make something fancy or luxurious, they over do it.

The birth of fancy came at a time when things were far from it. French cooking evolved from the need to transform less than desirable cuts of meat - all those offal parts - into something palatable, even delicious. These classic techniques were developed before the days of refrigeration and many of the ingredients were less than optimal. Let's face it, most people would not enjoy plain sweetbreads, especially ones that had spent some time on the counter without refrigeration. It needs to be fried or sautéed with a killer sauce and washed down with a Burgundy to become edible, let alone enjoyable.

Today, when we have access to quality, even artisanal ingredients, it does not make sense to mask it with lots of stuff. Too many times, the ego of the chef or winemaker gets in the way of simple perfection... that one last butter sauce or dollop of truffle oil that covers up simple goodness. In wine, it tends to be techniques like picking late for an overripe sweetness, bleeding wine off the skins to concentrate the juice, too much new wood or other highly manipulative methods that can take something that is inherently tasty and turn it into too much of a good thing.

Farmers understand that to create great produce you need to start with the soil. This is the hard part because there is no instant gratification. Years of working with cover crops, composting, and grazing animals result in the increase of just a few percentage points of organic content, but those few points make all the difference in the world. It is about improving the tilth of the soil, without reliance on artificial inputs, so that whatever you grow in that soil can access the nutrients as it needs it.

If you grow it well, less has to be done to make it great. You can take something great and mess it up, but you can't take something mediocre and make it great. It takes a certain confidence to leave well enough alone.

Abraxas, the wine, is the embodiment of leaving well enough alone. The name comes from early Egyptian and Greek origins. The belief was that Abraxas was the all powerful who embodied both good and evil. Abraxas ruled the 365 heavens and, in both Greek and Hebrew, the letters add up to 365. Abraxas takes the good with the bad and instead of seeking idyllic perfection, Abraxas embraces distinctiveness... and in wine, distinctiveness is the name of the game.

OMNIPOTENT ABRAXAS - by Maria Helm Sinskey

Since the birth of Abraxas in 2003, we've discovered that it is one of the most versatile and food friendly wines in the RSV quiver. Green vegetables, salads, seafood, chicken, pork, sausages, spices, pickled and fermented foods of all types, are child's play for the all-knowing Abraxas.

One of the reasons Abraxas is loved by chefs and sommeliers around the world is that it is a hero at the dinner table, punching way above its weight class. Whether your next gathering is a formal seated dinner or a casual backyard BBQ, let Abraxas work its magic at your next gathering - it will never disappoint.

Visit www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen for the *Spring Vegetable Salad* and *Sausages with Sauerkraut and Abraxas Mustard* recipes and other tempting originals by Maria Helm Sinskey.

