

ROBERT SINSKEY VINEYARDS



Abraxas

VIN DE TERROIR, SCINTILLA SONOMA VINEYARD 2015



- 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

Abraxas is a reaction against homogeneity and a salute to distinctiveness. Born of the idea that four grapes traditional to Alsace (Riesling, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and Gewürztraminer), planted in RSV's Organic Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard, would respond distinctly to the changing weather patterns of each year. The four varieties could then be blended in ratios determined by each variety's unique response to the vintage, making the wine whole, while avoiding the manipulations often found in a more industrialized cellar. Abraxas does not aspire to be anything but true to vintage.

The start of the 2015 vintage was unseasonably warm from late winter through early spring for an early bud break and bloom. It was relatively dry with 75% of "normal" rain for the season. Colder temperatures during May bloom resulted in an uneven fruit set and a smaller crop in general. This drought vintage produced lower average cluster weights and grapes with thicker skins for above average structure and intense flavor for each variety.

The warm, dry weather combined with the smaller clusters led to an early harvest with all white grapes entering the cellar door by the second week of September. All the white grapes were harvested in the cool of the night to arrive at the cellar cold for whole cluster pressing. Each variety and vineyard block was picked separately at quintessential ripeness and fermented for 28-30 days in stainless steel tanks.

FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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Abraxas, the Gnostic god of the 365 heavens, must have ruled this past year of extremes. The good came with a dose of bad, as we bore witness to the realities of climate change. Hopefully we have come out the other side, more aware and better for the experience.

“Abraxas speaketh that hallowed and accursed word, which is life and death at the same time. Abraxas begetteth truth and lying, good and evil, light and darkness in the same word and in the same act.”

-Abraxas in Carl Jung’s Seven Sermons to the Dead, 3rd Sermon.

In just a short period of time, Napa swung from record drought to record rain to record heat to a record wildfire season that almost took us out - and, as I write this, hail and even some snow is visiting the Carneros! They say, what does not kill you, makes you stronger. I hope that’s true.

The fire in my belly has been slowly dying while I watch this country move backwards; choosing ignorance over action on climate change and the environment. But giving up is not an option. Farming is the perfect place to make a stand. Though farmers have the most to lose in the near term, we can be the long-term solution if people are willing to pay the real cost of conscientiously growing produce, instead of supporting an industrial agriculture model that not only releases carbon, but also has higher downstream costs in environmental degradation, world health and human wellbeing. Farmers can choose not only organic methodology but practices that sequester carbon. And, customers can choose what methodology they want to support.

A recent study, posted in Wine Industry Insight, ranks the USA as the 4th WORST when it comes to percentage of vineyard area dedicated to organic farming amongst the 14 major global wine grape growers. The USA ranks just ahead of China with 2.7% of total vineyard acreage certified organic. This anemic figure is pretty sad when you consider the wealth of this country and the fact that we, as consumers, would rather save a few bucks purchasing wine grown on chemically farmed land than indulge in guilt-free hedonism. If we want change, both farmers and consumers need to be the change and vote with our pocketbooks for a better future.

Tasting Notes - by Jeff Virnig

Greetings from the Rhineland of Carneros! This wine tastes as though it came from another world. And, if you observe the landscape around the organically-farmed, Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard, it looks like another world. Close to the bay and the sloughs, the vineyard is influenced by the cooling fog and wind with an ideal climate for Alsatian varieties.

This wine is alive! It is pure, fresh and vibrant with aromas and flavors of green apple, pear, pineapple, lychee, lemon verbena and river stone minerality. These juicy, mouth-watering notes suggest that this wine should be sweet but, when tasted, a dry, clean, crisp profile defines Abraxas. This drought vintage led to clusters of grapes with smaller berry size for a wine with crisp, structured intensity. As the wine warms in the glass, the weight of Pinot Gris fills the mouth and is balanced by the natural spice from the Gewürztraminer. Meyer lemon, key lime, ripe peach, fresh pineapple, candied orange peel, ginger, cardamom and chamomile are intertwined from the first sip to the last. The wine’s complex flavor profile is matched by layers of evolving texture. This wine is ideal for the table in its youth, but will be a long-lived white wine for those who prefer the subtleties of age.

