

ROBERT SINSKEY VINEYARDS

# PINOT BLANC

LOS CARNEROS, 2008



- True Pinot Blanc, not the more common and lesser regarded impostor Melon de Bourgogne
- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Demeter Certified Biodynamic Vineyards
- Half bottles and Magnums = Start with it or party with it!
- Clean, pure and focused - No oak, no ML
- Produced in 375ML and 1.5L bottles
- Elegant glass stopper on the splits, cork finished magnums
- Delicate whole-cluster pressed fruit
- Fermented dry
- From RSV's Three Amigos, OSR, and Scintilla Sonoma Vineyards

Cases Produced: 1266 TA: 6 g/l PH: 3.43 Alc: 13.9%

## WINEGROWING NOTES:

Purity is a mantra at RSV and the Pinot Blanc embodies dedication to that ideal from dirt to bottle. RSV's certified organic and Biodynamic vineyards produce balanced fruit that does not require remedial or cosmetic winemaking. The cellar crew whole-cluster presses the hand-picked fruit gently, avoiding the extraction of bitter compounds from stems and seeds. After a short racking to settle out solids, the wine ferments in stainless steel at low temperature, preserving the fresh fruit flavors while stretching the ferment out, keeping the wine and yeast in contact for weeks, adding complexity and texture. No oak was harmed in the production of this wine, not even for the cork, as the wine's closure is an elegant glass stopper.

2008 was a short vintage. Yields were low due to drought and some untoward weather during flowering and fruit set. This means two things: the low yields provide for intense fruit and there's not a lot to go around.

## TASTING NOTES:

Brilliant pale lemon shimmers from the glass, as intense aromas of verbena, ripe apples, and almond greet a sniff. The wine is silky on the palate, with melons, citrus and white flower underscored by subtle minerality. It leaves fresh and bright, and keeps you coming back for more. Suggested recipes can be found at [robertsinskey.com](http://robertsinskey.com)



## FINE WINES FROM ORGANIC VINES

6320 Silverado Trail Napa, CA 94558 - tel 707.944.9090 or 800.869.2030 - [www.robertsinskey.com](http://www.robertsinskey.com)

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# A COLD ONE!

## Pinot Blanc with your crabby patty...

When my grandmother's eyes set upon me, I knew she was appalled. Turning to my father she hissed, "You shouldn't let him drink beer!" My father just shrugged it off. He figured if I tasted beer and wine in his presence, I would not look upon them as forbidden fruit.

I learned a lot that sweltering summer at one of our infrequent family reunions in Baltimore. The gathering's focal point was Chesapeake Bay crab. We would cook up as much as we could handle and wash it down with beer or, depending on your age, soda. We made crab cakes that were almost all crab, placed between two saltines and eaten like a sandwich. We boiled bushels of whole crab, laid them out on newspapers, smashed their shells with hammers and cracked their claws with nutcrackers. Juice and bits of shell flew everywhere; if we got too messy we would just jump into the pool. My father's favorite was softshell crab pan-fried in butter and eaten for breakfast.

I learned not only that there were many ways to cook crab, but that there were beer foods and wine foods. I have spent the rest of my life unlearning the lessons of that summer. Being a native Californian, I grew up with an eclectic culinary mix: the American junk foods of the 60's and 70's combined with Mexican and Japanese cuisines. Each food had its own beverage pairing option, none of which was wine. With Mexican food you had beer or margaritas. With Japanese it was beer or sake and with Dodger dogs, you drank beer and then, later, Alka-Seltzer.

Of course wine was not offered at Dodger stadium, that would have been un-American; however, every once in a while a wine would show up on the menu at the Japanese or Mexican place. If you were brave enough to order it, you were rewarded with something that tasted like swill by itself and absolutely horrendous with the food. This plonk forever damaged the reputation of wine's ability to pair with the intricacies of ethnic cuisine. As a result, you rightly assumed you were better off with a beer.

Even with a proper bottle of wine, these foods can make for a challenging pairing. An oaky white wine, no matter its pedigree, will not pair well with crab, aggressive spice, chile or the umami of Asian foods, but a clean, bright, un-oaked white wine can. There is a reason tradition

calls for unwooded Chablis with shellfish instead of heavily wooded white Burgundies.

Traditionally, most Pinot Blanc was made in a clean, bright, and straightforward style. It wasn't until Pinot Blanc hit the New World that many winemakers decided more is more and allowed the wine to go through both barrel and malolactic fermentations - two techniques that soften the wine and mask its fruit with secondary flavors and aromas. Since Pinot Blanc is delicate to begin with, the wood can overwhelm the fruit, and become the main flavor of the wine. This can work at cocktail time and maybe with chicken, but this style is clumsy with delicate foods or ethnic cuisines.

White wine can be so much more. It can be the salve that cools the heat of spice or the refreshment that washes down the crab. However, not all white wine will do. If you want to replace beer with wine for traditional beer foods, you need to understand a few rules.

1. Unoaked is good. The recession is encouraging winemakers to use less oak to cut costs, prompting the realization that many grapes don't need oak in the first place. There are more fresh whites than ever before.
2. Fruit is your friend. Wines that taste like grapes and fruit will pair better with a wider range of cuisine.
3. Acid is good. Bright acidity makes you salivate and helps the wine cut through strong flavors.
4. A little bit of sugar turns down the heat. Spicy food either requires lots of fruit or a touch of sugar (RSV Pinot Blanc is fermented dry but it does have lots of fruit character) to tame the heat. The best combination for Mexican or Thai food is a wine that has forward fruit, a touch of residual sugar and good acidity.
5. Serve the wine a little colder than optimum. It will be refreshing and will quickly warm up in the glass.
6. If you still miss beer, just let out a big belch.

Not too long ago, I was in Wisconsin, where beer and brats are not just a ballpark favorite, but part of their identity. I hope I live long enough to see the day when a nice crisp American white wine is poured alongside kegs of suds and I witness a burly guy in a Packers jersey yell out, "Give me a Blanc and a Brat!"

-Rob Sinskey

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