



2003 THREE AMIGOS VINEYARD CHARDONNAY — ADIOS MUCHACHOS! —

The 2003 vintage is the final curtain call for RSV's Three Amigos Vineyard Chardonnay.

This is the vineyard that showed us the way. First planted in 1982, it showed signs of weakness as early as 1988. Shortly thereafter, the root louse phylloxera was discovered in the soil. In 1990, we were told to give it up for dead, rip it out and start over. We tried something else.

We thought if we could nurture the soil so that the vine could access nutrients in a constant, steady manner, that the vine and the bug could cohabitate, and the vine would thrive. Our experiment in organic and biodynamic viticulture exceeded our expectations. Not only did the vine thrive, this vineyard began to produce fruit that merited a vineyard designate! That jump in quality and character precipitated solely by the change in our farming made the difficult transition to organic and biodynamic viticulture a vital and necessary step to take throughout our entire operation. We've now seen similar improvements in the health and vitality of all our nearly two hundred acres under vine. Our thriving vineyards produce fruit of inimitable quality and character that requires little manipulation on its way to your dinner table.

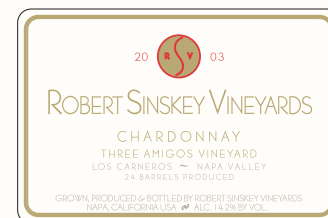
So, it's with a tear in the eye that we say goodbye to this wine. Phylloxera eventually required replanting of the vineyard and we chose to replant largely to other varietals. But take heart, this Chardonnay is built to last with sturdy acidity and abundant fruit, so lay it down and enjoy it for years to come!

— Winemaking Notes —

The 2003 vintage incorporated some of the best characteristics of the two previous vintages. 2001 was a cooler year in Carneros and the resulting wines had bright refreshing acidity. 2002 was a very warm year that produced luscious fruit. 2003 was cool enough for the grapes to retain that bright acidity reminiscent of 2001, but there was also ample sunshine to bring out some of the richness of fruit apparent in the 2002.

We whole cluster pressed our 2003 Chardonnay and fermented the free-run juice in 30% new French oak barrels. The wine then rested in those same barrels on the natural yeast cells known as lees. This aging on the lees enriches the mouthfeel of the wine and lends complexity. We chose not to force the wine through malo-lactic fermentation, that secondary fermentation responsible for the buttery flavors in a lot of Chardonnay. Chardonnay is not popcorn, after all, though they admittedly go well together.

— Tasting Notes —



Exotic aromas of guava, apple and citrus mingle with more familiar scents of vanilla and pear. The pear and tropical fruit follow on the rich palate, finding contrast in bright mouthwatering acidity. Beneath all the forward fruit, hazelnuts and minerals add detail. This wine balances perfectly on the razor thin edge between ripeness and structure. As we bid "Adios" to this final vintage of RSV's Three Amigos Vineyard Chardonnay, rest assured, we saved the best for last.