

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS

PINOT NOIR

LOS CARNEROS, 2007



- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Demeter Certified Biodynamic Vineyards
- 100% Pinot Noir
- Heirloom Selections and French Clones
- 32 separately harvested and vinified lots
- From all five of RSV's Carneros Vineyards
- Harvest Date Range: 8/20 - 9/6
- 100% French Oak Barrels, 35% New for 10 months

Barrels Produced: 213 TA: 6 g/l PH: 3.57 Alc: 13.6%

WINEGROWING NOTES:

If winegrowing tests the patience of those seeking instant gratification, then organic and Biodynamic winegrowing will drive them insane!

First, find a suitable site for what you want to grow, then plant your vines and carefully guard the young plants against the challenges that will beset them. With luck, you'll see the vineyards' potential in about seven years, with the best wines often coming from vines decades old.

The shortcuts of modern farming technology tempt with claims of easy fixes for anything that ails you: vigor, nutrition, mildew, weeds, insects... an input (pseudonym for chemical) is just a phone call away. These technologies work fast, but at what cost? Once most of the flora and fauna have been knocked out of the vineyard, a vacuum is left for pathogens and pestilence to fill, for which there is another quick fix... and so begins the downward spiral of rescue chemistry.

Organic and Biodynamic farming methods work more slowly and are more difficult to implement, requiring thought and patience. Often, when farms

transition from the chemical model to progressive farming, there is a withdrawal period and things appear worse before they get better.

RSV has experienced steady increases in both quality and character of fruit since the move to organics in 1991. Of late, this upward curve seems to be steepening. It could be the vines, the farming, the experience or, most likely, a combination of the three. Some people taste the wines and ask if there is a new winemaker at RSV. The answer, of course, is no! Jeff Virnig has made wine at RSV for over twenty years. That's part of why the wines continue to get better. Winemakers and vines both improve with age.

TASTING NOTES:

Brilliant, translucent ruby color gleams from the glass while bright red fruit and spice aromas greet. Classic flavors of red raspberries, cranberries, and orange peel conspire with sensual, earthy undercurrents that define cool climate Pinot Noir. The wine balances silky texture against a bright edge that keeps you returning to the glass for more (and then to your plate for another nibble).

-Eric Sothorn

FINE WINES FROM ORGANIC VINES

6320 Silverado Trail Napa, CA 94558 - tel 707.944.9090 or 800.869.2030 - www.robertsinskey.com

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THIS AIN'T NO PICNIC!

Life Lessons in Pinot Noir

When I took over the business, I told my father we would have five years before declaring bankruptcy.

That was twenty-two years ago. It wasn't that I didn't believe in what we were doing, it's just that the odds were stacked against us.

In 1982, we planted our first vineyards in the cool Carneros region to Chardonnay, Merlot and Pinot Noir. It was a daunting time. California was in a drought and the country was in recession. The Chardonnay market was saturated, Merlot had yet to achieve broad acceptance, and new world Pinots, with few exceptions, were perceived as vintners' folly. Only risk junkies pursued the thin skinned Pinot grape. It's a good thing it wasn't easy, because without the challenge I might not have stuck with a life in wine.

Pinot Noir became my muse. She scared and thrilled me at the same time. I didn't always understand her, but I intuitively knew that if we provided for her, she would reveal her subtle and elegant beauty. She had no qualms, however, about telling us when we made mistakes. At times, she gave us the silent treatment, closing in on herself, tight lipped and determined to reveal little; or she might throw a fit, hurling an aromatic assault of tomatoes, medicine chest and rubber tennis shoes. The worst was when you missed the mark by showing up late (to harvest) and discovered your delicate Pinot shriveled up like a beauty queen who had spent her better years tanning at the beach, now prematurely aged, brown at the edges with a tired essence of prune.

Jeff Virnig and I decided that, for better or worse, we were going to figure out this grape, learn what made her happy and craft wines of natural beauty. Not necessarily showy wines; instead, our Pinots would be elegant, intriguing wines that evolve, holding back just enough to pique your interest and retain your attention.

We looked to the dirt and decided that the first step was to return the soil to a thriving subterranean

environment of earthworms, microorganisms, bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi. So in 1991 we went organic and started applying Biodynamic preparations to the soil, vines and compost. We quit discing, planted cover crops and employed sheep to graze the lush growth between the vines.

We worked with selections and clones that matured in sync with the local climatic conditions and discovered that later ripening heirloom selections (as opposed to the newer, less subtle, earlier-ripening, French clones) allowed for longer hang time, developing complex flavors while maintaining acidity, structure and moderate alcohol levels.



We found that less is more when working with the grapes in the cellar: less manipulation, less additions, less handling, less new wood. We learned to be confident with our fruit and not mask it with cellar cosmetics.

Two thousand and seven is our twenty-second vintage of Pinot Noir. Once we were the youngest upstarts making Pinot Noir in Napa. Now, we are a little gray and we've earned a few worry lines, but we feel even more hip today with two plus decades of Pinot under our belt, working with the same vineyards and the same winemaker, making better wines every year... and best of all, we're still here to tell the tale.

-Rob Sinskey

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