

ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS

MARCIEN

PROPRIETARY RED, LOS CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY, 2007



- CCOF Certified Organic Vineyards
- Demeter Certified Biodynamic Vineyards
- Marcien represents RSV's best effort given vintage and vineyards
- From the "Right Bank" of Napa aka, Carneros
- A Saint-Émilion with a suntan
- Three classic Bordeaux varieties: Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon
- From RSV's Vandal, OSR and Three Amigos Vineyards
- Cave aged 18 Months in 35% new French oak barrels
- "Half-case" packaging, the equivalent of 675 cases produced in 6x750ml packs

TA: 6.46 g/l pH: 3.56 Alc: 13.7%

WINEGROWING NOTES

2007 was the wine makers vintage. A matter of fact, it was so close to ideal that it was a challenge to not make great wine. It was the first year of drought-like conditions with roughly 60% of normal precipitation that controlled vigor, causing the Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon to develop small berries, clusters and lower than average yields. The summer was mild and cool, allowing for even ripening with dense color development, mature tannins and mouth watering acidity. The balance of fruit and tannin will assure that this vintage of Marcien will be a wine that will continue to develop for a long time to come.

Marcien c.1386, "Of the planet Mars" or from 1883, "an inhabitant of the planet Mars."

A quarter century ago, RSV dismissed a warning from fellow vintners that Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc would not ripen in their cool Carneros vineyards. Well, RSV's Biodynamically grown, "Right Bank" of Napa wine might as well be from Mars... it is an elegant alien amongst the over-the-top natives. Maybe it's best described as the bridge between Old and New Worlds; a Saint-Émilion with a suntan!

Marcien, though made of three classic Bordeaux varieties, does not have the actual constitution of the cuvée on the label as the final blend is not predestined from year to year. Marcien is blended purely by taste and texture to create the most expressive wine from a given year. Marcien is RSV's best effort from the vintage and the vineyards.

TASTING NOTES

Elegant and restrained aromas of forest floor and spice waft up from the glass until a swirl reveals a bouquet of red stone fruit, and blackberry with just a hint of spice and meaty smokiness... yet no one element overpowers the other. The flavors are restrained at first yet continue to open with time in the glass. There is an appearance of sweet fruit (though the wine is dry), while the firm, fully developed tannins create balance as the earthy notes evolve into black fruits with hints of dark chocolate. The long mouth-watering finish makes for a particularly affable dinner companion and suggests that this elegant, balanced wine will age gracefully... that is, if you can wait!

MARCIEN LOVE SONG

WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT PLACE, LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING?



I am guilty of an affair. It's been going on for quite some time now and the weight of keeping it quiet is too much to bear. The one thing I have learned from keeping such a dark secret is that you can't deny the real thing. I tried, believe me, I tried to walk the line, but seduction was preordained.

Pinot Noir was my first love and I thought would always be the ONE! We hooked up almost thirty years ago when RSV planted three varieties: Chardonnay, Merlot and Pinot Noir. The first two were planted as a cash crop to support our beloved Pinot Noir. In those days, the world at large was little enamored with the variety, but we were believers and knew the Carneros would produce superlative and delicate red wine from the thin skinned grape.

As the years passed, we watched our Pinot Noir blossom into a beautiful, well adjusted wine. Yet there were certain parcels where it was too pugnacious, lacking the ethereal structure that makes Pinot unique and appealing. At the same time, we noticed that one of our cash crop varieties, Merlot, was surprisingly delicious, with intense flavor, aromatics and a mouth watering brightness.

Everything we learned from the fickle nature of Pinot Noir and how it responded to specificities of place could also be applied to Bordeaux varieties. It all had to do with being sensitive to the land.

RSV owned its vineyards long before the inception of the winery, allowing almost 30 years of study to ascertain which varietals respond best to each site. RSV has relentlessly and steadfastly pursued heirloom and massal vine selections, combining them with rootstocks that best suit the aspect and site. The vineyards are spread out over six different sites (five in the Carneros) with different heat summations, exposures and soils. By being sensitive to site, we learned where the classic Bordeaux varieties of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc would naturally thrive to create wines with structure

reminiscent of the Old World yet with beguiling New World intensity.

As Biodynamic farmers, RSV looks at the vineyard as an organism that must be both self sufficient and integrated with its surroundings. The farm (vineyard) needs to fit the place, rather than the other way 'round. By encouraging the vineyards to become part of the surrounding ecosystem, nature partners with RSV, embracing efforts instead of battling against them. As nature's desires become known, it is an important part of the "fit" to plant varieties that respond to the cues of place.

So, I fell in love with Pinot Noir, but I have been seduced by the triumvirate of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. It just couldn't be denied... it was meant to be.

MARCIEN TRIVIA

HISTORY: Flavius Marcianus, known in French as Marcien, was Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire from 450 until his death in 457. Marcien, considered one of the best of the early Byzantine emperors, was recognized by the Eastern Orthodox Church as a saint. Before becoming Emperor, Marcien was taken prisoner in 431 by the Vandals in fighting near Hippo Regius; brought before the Vandal King Geiseric, he was released on his oath never to take up arms against the Vandals again. While Marcien comes from several of RSV's Biodynamically farmed Carneros vineyards, the majority of the grapes come from RSV's Vandal Vineyard.

BIODYNAMICS: Mars is an influential astral body. It affects plants with red flowers or fruit. Silica and iron is energized by Mars. Silica can aid photosynthesis while iron provides minerality. Mars influences humankind's iron will.

ASTROLOGY: The true Mars spirit shows itself in nonviolent strength, winning competitions by transformation. Mars energy is seen as stamina and achievement.

-Rob Sinskey

FINE WINES FROM ORGANIC VINES

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