



- Grown in RSV's Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard
- Certified Organic (CCOF) & Biodynamic (Demeter) Vineyards
- Produced from four classic Alsace varieties
- 2010 Cuveé: 43% Pinot Gris, 32% Pinot Blanc, 15% Gewürztraminer, 10% Riesling
- Delicate whole-cluster pressed fruit
- Fermented dry
- No barrels for a bright, pure and true wine
- Elegant glass stoppered 750ml bottles: 1779 cases
- Cork finished magnums: 34 cases

TA: 5.7 g/l pH: 3.47 Alc: 14%

WINE GEEK NOTES

The cool, wet winter and spring of 2010 pushed bloom back for a late start. Summer felt like spring with plenty of Carneros fog and cooler than normal temperatures. An August heat spike reminded that it was summer, but it was short-lived, as the mercury dropped again. The fruit was harvested before the triple digit heat wave in September, allowing a relaxed harvest of balanced grapes with great flavor development, good natural acidity and reasonable alcohol levels.

Each vineyard block is hand picked in the wee and chilly pre-dawn hours, ensuring the grapes are in the best possible condition for their trip to the cellar. Whole clusters go into the press as gentle pressure is applied to extract the juice without driving bitter or coarse components from the skins, stems and seeds. The juice is held in stainless steel tank at very low temp to prevent the initiation of fermentation for a day, allowing solids to precipitate out. After racking off the settled solids, the wine is run back to stainless steel tank for a chilly ferment at 58 degrees. The low temperature does a few things: preserves the fresh vivacious fruit character; slows down the yeast, making for a month long ferment; and allows more of the carbon dioxide produced by the ferment to go into solution, acting to enhance acidity, lift aroma, and protect the wine from oxidation. Each lot is guided through the cellar separately before blending trials commence to create a wine that best expresses the vintage.

WINEGROWING NOTES

Abraxas is a salute to distinctiveness and a reaction against homogeneity. Born of the idea that four classic grapes of Alsace (Pinot Gris, Riesling, Gewurztraminer and Pinot Blanc), planted in RSV's Organic and Biodynamic Scintilla Sonoma Vineyard, would respond distinctly to the unique weather patterns of each year. Then, the four varieties could 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.

TASTING NOTES

A pale, brilliant platinum blond color heralds the wine's purity. With a snap of the glass stopper, aromas explode from the bottle. A swirl of the glass amplifies scents of apples, citrus, and stone fruit; all backed by flowers, herbs, yeast and a beguiling minerality. The wine crackles with energy on the palate, ethereal and vivacious, but with power and substance. Crisp flavors of apple and lemon overlay more luscious notes of peaches with sweet green herbs, white flower, a touch of ginger, and that persistent mineral character.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?



GODS, GUITARS AND GEWURZTRAMINER...

I'm a modern day romantic cynic, a living contradiction. I don't believe in Potter-esque wizardly magic, but I know magic exists. Magic occurs in a place that feels right, when things are put together just so; sculpted, crafted, or played with skill - like a Carlos Santana guitar solo! It is in the glint of an eye, a properly timed smile, or an unexpected question from one of my daughters. Magic happens when the world speaks, and you just happen to be listening.

The origins of Abraxas are from a time when questions could not be answered with reason or science and were instead enshrouded in mysticism. Abraxas made its earliest known appearances in the Gnostic "Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit" and the Greek "Magical Papyri," bestowing Abraxas with the fantastic and the magical from the beginning.

For an ancient Greek or Egyptian, looking up into the night sky to see planets move against a backdrop of stars was magic, a dance not fully understood. Rotations could be counted, yet no one knew it was they who were riding the spinning orb.

Conjuring the spirits, a god was created to explain the natural or, in their mind, the supernatural. Abraxas was the Great Archon, the supreme god who embodied both good and evil. Abraxas, with the head of a cock, the body of a man and legs of the serpent, was the overlord of the 365 spheres and (just in case you did not make the connection that Abraxas was responsible for the year) the Greek letters of Abraxas add up to 365. Abraxas also represented the natural through its spelling, with each of its letters tied to one of the seven classic planets, then believed to be the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

Abraxas was nature in all its good and evil glory. The ancients, without the modern tools of science, were unable to explain the life forces around them, so instead they created a god with supernatural attributes to explain the unexplainable.

All of this is not an issue for the people of today, or is it? We are an arrogant bunch. We believe we know it all, that we have or can find all the answers. We know that the sun is a star and there are nine planets ... no, wait, now there are only eight! New knowledge, that was unavailable to us only a few years ago, had the power to change our perception of our solar system. It makes you wonder what else we don't know?

Less than a hundred years ago, Rudolph Steiner gave a lecture to a group of farmers that became the basis for the method of farming we call Biodynamic. Steiner attempted to connect "life forces" (read: the forces of nature) with the activity and results on the farm. His goal was to teach the farmer to reconnect with nature to create produce that would provide the highest level of quality to feed not only the body, but the spirit.

Rudolph was not a farmer, but what he lacked in practical knowledge, he more than made up for with his power of observation. He was able to look at the cycles of the moon and theorize its impact on plant life, or observe the destruction caused by the newly mechanized industrial farm (that treated land more like a mine than as a resource) and see the need for creating methods to heal the earth.

Steiner lived at that intersection of disciplines where magic happens. As a scientist, philosopher, theologian and educator, he could draw from each area of study to formulate his theories and methods. Sometimes, when something was unexplainable with known science, he fell back on the spiritual or ritualistic, which resulted in some embarrassingly silly procedures that makes some, including us, question whether or not he is a worthy mentor. But then you see the magic in the farm and look back at the path Biodynamics has lead, and you realize there is nothing wrong with trying to tap into the power of nature, even if you don't fully comprehend its origins ... because nature is magic.

-Rob Sinskey

FINE WINES FROM ORGANIC VINES

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