



# ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS

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ORGIA, LOS CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY 2016





# A TOUCH OF GRIS!

by Rob Sinskey

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Most don't think about the contribution "texture" makes to the perception of a wine. The way a wine feels in your mouth is as significant as aroma and flavor - but it doesn't happen by accident. It takes a balancing act to craft a wine with an impressive texture... especially from a non-red grape like Pinot Gris.

Pinot Gris is a bit of a chameleon with many different renditions based on tradition or growing region, with each style in a different place on the texture spectrum. The differences can be based on climate, soil, clone or selection and vinification techniques.

The most popular modern version of the Italian variant of Pinot Gris is what most people know as Pinot Grigio. These wines are the lightest in texture. Most Pinot Grigio wines are fermented off the skins and are bright in acidity balanced by either fruit characteristics or sweetness. This style makes for great summer sipping, especially when food and conversation is more important than what's in your glass. They are light and delicious but sometimes lack balance and gravitas.

The Alsatian version of Pinot Gris can be a little more difficult to get a handle on. They tend to be higher alcohol than their Italian neighbor's rendition and many have some form of residual sugar. The combination of alcohol and sugar can make the wine feel thick, as Pinot Gris can naturally have an oily texture and, since it is naturally low in acidity, that can make it seem flabby.

What is missing in these examples is tannin. In the old, pre-industrial winemaking days, almost all wines were fermented on the skins. The downside to fermenting non-red wines on the skins is that it can make a wine with hard, bitter phenolics. The upside is that the wines age as the tannin acts as a natural preservative, but you have to wait...sometimes many years before the wine is drinkable. But these wines have texture. You can feel how the tannin plays off the fruit, sugar and acid for a wine with a great mouthfeel that makes it incredibly versatile to almost any cuisine and dining environment.

Orgia is a refined version of an "old school" Pinot Gris. It combines the best of both whole-cluster-pressed (no skins during fermentation) and skin-contact wines to strike that delicate tactile balance of acid, fruit, alcohol and tannin in a wine that is seriously delicious, with a magical mouthfeel and a beautiful copper (ramato) hue that is unlike any other wine. We feel it reflects the "true" character of Pinot Gris.

## ***Winegrowing Notes***

Pinot Gris, grown on RSV's organically farmed Three Amigos Vineyard, is hand-picked at night and delivered to the cellar door in pristine condition. Thirty percent of the fruit is fermented on the skins to extract flavor, tannin, and color then put down to age in old French oak barrels. The remaining fruit is delicately whole-cluster-pressed and cold-fermented in stainless tanks to preserve freshness and beautiful aromatics. The wine is aged for almost four years before release.

## ***Tasting Notes***

A stunningly beautiful "ramato" style wine with a unique copper hue. This 100% Pinot Gris from RSV's organically farmed Three Amigos Vineyard is about as distinctive as it gets. The wine is gorgeous to the eye as it shimmers in the light. The aroma is shy to start, but with a swirl in the glass, the bouquet opens to reveal jasmine, white peach and grapefruit zest, layered into a generous mouthfeel marked by flavors of apricot, blood orange, fresh honeydew melon and lime zest. The finish is lengthened by juicy tannin - true to its "ramato" skin contact style - with a hint of salinity and mineral backbone. This wine is a perfect partner to all kinds of cuisine and manages to transition from light and delicate vegetable and seafood dishes to hearty grilled meats with aplomb. (06/2020)





## BY THE SEA

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The harvest of tender shoots of rock and marsh samphire coincides with the arrival of wild salmon in California. Sea fennel or rock samphire (*Crithium Maritimum*) is a spontaneous herb which grows between the rocks bordering the sea in the area of the Conero Riviera in the Marche region of Italy. This “grass” is called paccasassi which literally means “breaking rocks” due to its ability to grow up through sea stone fissures. Pickled, it is tender and aromatic lending a unique taste to simple vinaigrettes or alone as a garnish for fish, vegetables and cured meats. It’s so delicious I like to eat it by the forkful. While we don’t have sea fennel in the US we have sea beans which grow alongside salt marshes and can be harvested and used as a substitute for sea fennel.

Eating sea fennel reminds me of the sea. Its texture and flavor captures the essence of a sunny day by the beach. Orgia also reminds me of the sea. There is a salty minerality on the edges of this copper hued beauty. This saltiness coupled with the light tannins from skin contact make your mouth water. Its taste and texture prepare you for a delicious meal of wild salmon and sea fennel in the sun by the sparkling sea.

Until the Next Wine.... *Maria*



## POACHED SALMON WITH PICKLED ROCK SAMPHIRE

*Wild salmon with its fatty meat works best for poaching. Leave the skin on so it can contribute its rich gelatin to the poaching liquid. Just be sure to remove the scales. Fresh dill may be substituted for tarragon for a twist. Serve 4 to 6*

2 pounds skin on salmon filet (10 oz ½ inch thick filet was 5-6 minutes)

Handful of flat leaf parsley leaves for garnish

### Poaching liquid:

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 cup white wine

4 cups water

1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons kosher salt

4 6-inch tarragon sprigs

1 teaspoon whole peppercorns

### Vinaigrette:

3 tablespoons lemon juice

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

6 tablespoons Pickled Sea Fennel

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1. Place all of the poaching liquid ingredients in a medium shallow pan fitted with a lid and bring to a simmer.
2. Add the salmon, bring to a boil, reduce to a slow simmer and cover. Poach for 10 to 12 minutes until fish is just cooked. Keep the heat at a slow simmer.
3. Make a small break at the center of the fish to see if it is cooked. Fish should be cooked medium but not exude excessive amounts of white albumen. A little of the white is fine.
4. While the fish is poaching whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil and sea fennel in a small bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Reserve.
5. Remove the fish from the poaching liquid with a slotted spatula and place on a serving plate. Sprinkle with parsley leaves. Serve hot, warm, or chilled, with vinaigrette over the top or on the side. If desired, serve with Potato Salad dressed with Pickled Sea Fennel.

## NEW POTATO SALAD DRESSED WITH PICKLED SEA FENNEL

*If you use large potatoes cut into marble sized pieces and cook the same way. If the potatoes are thin-skinned there is no need to peel them.*

1 ½ pounds marble-sized new potatoes

Kosher salt

1 small yellow onion finely diced or 1 tablespoon minced shallot

2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons chopped pickled sea fennel with its olive oil

1. Bring a medium pot of water to a boil and add a handful of kosher salt. Add the potatoes and cook until tender 10 to 12 minutes depending on size.
2. Drain the potatoes, cut in half and place in a large bowl.
3. While the potatoes are still warm toss with the onion or shallot and vinegar. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add a little more vinegar to taste if you like your potato salad tangy.
4. Add the olive oil and the sea fennel and toss with the potatoes. Adjust the seasoning and let sit for 30 minutes before serving.

## PICKLED SEA FENNEL, AKA ROCK SAMPHIRE

*Sea fennel is gathered in the Mediterranean in May and early June. Sea beans, also called marsh samphire, grow in the pacific northwest and in pockets on the western US coast. They are harvested along salt marshes in the summer starting in June. Sea beans are thicker and crunchier than rock samphire but can be preserved in the same way. Just be sure to blanch them for a short time or they will turn to mush.*

1 pound sea fennel, tender stems and leaves or sea beans  
Kosher salt

White wine vinegar  
Extra virgin olive oil

1. Wash the sea fennel well in a large bowl of cold water. Lift from the bowl to leave any sand behind.
2. Prepare a bowl of ice water to receive the sea fennel.
3. Bring a large pot of generously salted water (6 tablespoons to 1 ½ quarts) to a boil. Add the sea fennel and blanch 2-3 minutes, just to soften. The leaves will still be bright green and crunchy. If you are using sea beans, blanch for 20-30 seconds. Remove to the bowl of ice water with a slotted spoon until cool. Drain well.
4. Pack the leaves tightly in pint jars then add 2 teaspoons salt and fill the jars with vinegar. Close the lid, turn over a few times, then let stand for 24 hours. Drain, place back in the jars, and cover with olive oil and seal. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 month. Reserve the salted vinegar for future pickling or vinaigrettes.





## FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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