



ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS

PINOT NOIR, FOUR VINEYARDS, LOS CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY 2015



The Four Vineyards Pinot Noir

Pinot Noir winegrowers are an opinionated bunch. Each will convince you that they have unlocked the secret to growing and making great Pinot Noir... and many have. When we started making wine over 30 years ago, it was difficult to find drinkable Pinot Noir let alone great Pinot Noir. In those days, the quest was to plant in a cool climate and acquire the “right” field selection or clone. We in the New World had an inferiority complex with our existing - what we now call “heirloom” field selections - and felt the need to try out the newest import, unintentionally shunning the distinct beauty of our uniquely adapted field selections. We were insecure with our origins because we felt they had something we didn’t. At the time, we didn’t realize the opposite was also true.

Pinot Noir winemakers were considered the rebels on a folly’s quest. We stuck together because misery loves company. We would gather to discuss our craft in places like Steamboat Oregon or the Central Coast of California and invite illuminati guests from the Mecca of Pinot - Burgundy. We would talk soil, trellising, fermentation, to ferment with stems or not, wild or cultivated yeast, punch or pump, cold soak or not, type of barrels and what percentage new and all the minutiae that only a Pinot lover could obsess about. But the conversation always returned to location, clone or field selection. Some felt site was key while others felt clones were as, if not more, important. Then the question turned to whether or not one clone was the way to go while others advocated for as many different clones or selections as possible. Should we focus on single vineyard wines or a cuvée from many locations? We were all trying to achieve our vision of great Pinot Noir - and we were all right because the wine just kept getting better. Still, some wines stood out from the crowd. Though I think a single vineyard Pinot Noir can make a great, pure expression of Pinot Noir - as we have expressed with our Three Amigos, Vandal and Capa Vineyard Pinots. Even though these are single vineyard wines they are still cuvées of multiple clones and specific sites or blocks within the single vineyard and their strength can also be their weakness in that their expression can be limited by micro-climate and the weather of that particular vintage.

A cuvée from several sites within the macro-climate of a larger region allows the winemaker to create a fantasy wine. We all have “that wine” that grabbed us and made us want to pursue the “heartbreak grape” regardless of the financial risk. Having several locations within a region, planted with different “heirloom” and French clones allows us to reach into our flavor memory banks to create a cuvée that embodies that fantasy style of Pinot Noir that inspired us in the first place.

The Four Vineyards Pinot Noir is just such a fantasy wine. Careful farming, heirloom preservation, select French clones and sites that span the Napa side of the Carneros from the most southern tip to the northern boundary, is what contributes to the whole and allows site by site and clone selection to create the “ideal” wine of the vintage. One that deftly navigates that space between power and elegance for a wine that is our fantasy of great Pinot Noir.





Winegrowing Notes

The vintage of 2015 came during the fourth year of drought. Though the cluster counts were average to above average, the weight of the small, concentrated clusters were lower as the Pinot Noir vineyards reacted to the extended drought with smaller yields overall. This was a curse, as there was less fruit, but a blessing in that the tiny but mighty clusters exhibited intense fruit character and concentration. Hand-harvested at night at optimal ripeness, each vineyard block came to the cellar cool, fresh and kissed with morning dew. Native yeast started the fermentation in the vessel that best expressed the character of the particular selection - open box with hand punch or open top fermenter with pneumatic punch and cap irrigation. Each lot was fermented dry then put to rest in RSV's caves for a year in French Oak barrels.

After barrel age, lots were selected by taste where each vineyard block from RSV's Four Vineyards on the Napa side of the Carneros could contribute unique qualities in crafting a transcendent Pinot Noir.

Tasting Notes

A ruby garnet hue is as alluring as the wine's high-tone rose and sage essence, followed by cherry, red berry bramble, forest floor, cinnamon and clove aromas. The complete bouquet is unmistakably that of classic Pinot Noir. The first sip is bright and youthful, with flavors of strawberry, raspberry and red plum followed by undertones of pipe tobacco and a hint of tar. The finish is long thanks to polished tannins that are a present and equal partner to the wine's mouthwatering brightness. This 2015 vintage is the Pinot you want with roasted birds or pork, lamb, or lean cuts of beef fresh off the grill.

The equivalent of 481 (12x750ml) cases produced for 962 (6x750ml) cases



BALANCING ACT

Balance is the key to a great Pinot Noir. It's also the key to a great dish. Stuffing is one of those dishes that craves balance. A sign of a good stuffing is one whose flavor and texture haunts you after you've swallowed the first bite. You're compelled to go back and have another bite, and then another and another. The stuffing recipe below is why I often find my relatives in the kitchen standing around the stuffing pan after Thanksgiving meal picking off hunks with their hands and greedily "stuffing" it in their mouths. That quality is also a good indicator of a fine Pinot Noir. The first sip introduces you to the wine and after you swallow that first taste, the flavor and texture haunts you so much you have to take another sip, and another, just like you have to take another bite of stuffing.

Make the stuffing and stuff it inside a good bird. A chicken would be great if you don't want to wait until Thanksgiving. Quail, partially deboned is also delicious and easy to stuff and roast. You certainly want to enjoy a glass of the Four Vineyards before Turkey Day. If you wait until then, you'll have to share your Pinot, but I guess that's what Thanksgiving is about. You can always pick up more. Hallelujah!

Until the Next Wine.... *Maria*



ROAST QUAIL WITH APPLE CHESTNUT STUFFING

I love the bit of tart brightness the apples give this stuffing. It adds a nice balance to the richness of the stuffing. The chestnuts add a wonderfully nutty sweetness. The two together make a wonderful stuffing full of texture and flavor.

Yield: 6 cups

4 large boneless quail

Kosher salt

6 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 cups diced apple, ½ inch pieces

Freshly ground black pepper

1 medium yellow onion, finely diced

2 medium celery stalks, finely diced

2 cups chicken stock

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary

1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage

2 tablespoon chopped fresh flat leaf parsley

½ pound peasant loaf, cut into ½ inch cubes, lightly toasted

1 cup coarsely chopped chestnuts

1. Season the quail lightly inside and out with 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Let sit for 20 minutes or overnight wrapped in the refrigerator.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of butter in a large sauté pan over medium high heat. When the butter begins to brown, add the apples. Season the apples with salt and pepper and sauté them until they are golden, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat if pan begins to smoke and burn.
3. Add the onions and celery to the apples and continue to cook over medium heat for 5 to 6 minutes until the onions are golden and the celery is tender. Season with salt and pepper and turn out into the bowl with the apples. Add the chicken stock to the pan and bring it to a boil. Loosen browned bits on the bottom of the pan, add the remaining 4 tablespoons of butter and then pour the stock over the apples and vegetables in the bowl.
4. Add the herbs, bread and chestnuts to the bowl and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper and mix well again. Place the stuffing in the refrigerator to chill thoroughly. The stuffing may be made a day in advance.
5. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
6. To stuff the quail, use your fingers to stretch the cavity as wide as you can. Fill the cavity with as much stuffing as it can accommodate. Birds should be plump. Tie legs securely with string.
7. Season the quail with freshly ground black pepper. No more salt is necessary. In a large sauté pan sear over medium high heat until the birds are golden all over.
8. Finish in the oven until cooked through, about 20 to 30 minutes.



FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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