

# ROBERT SINSKEY VINEYARDS

MERLOT 2016



*Los Carneros, Napa Valley*



- Organic - CCOF Certified Vineyards
- Cool maritime growing region influenced by the San Pablo Bay
- Heat summation comparable to St. Emilion
- Cave aged 18 months in French oak
- 30% new barrels for subtlety
- 20 barrels produced

## ***Winegrowing Notes***

The “Right Bank of Napa” sits along a ridge that travels from the base of Mount Veeder into the Northern reaches of the Carneros region. If you follow the ridgeline, the Vandal Vineyard is at the “top” of the region and, as you head southeast, you meet the Capa Vineyard and the new “Wilding Farm” before moving further south to the OSR vineyard.

All of these organically farmed vineyards are in a region that we believe should be considered separate from the lower Carneros. The “Right Bank” varieties of Merlot and Cabernet Franc thrive in the upper Carneros micro-climate with its long growing season and red volcanic and clay loam soils. Some of our favorite wines of all time have come from grapes grown in this region.

## ***Tasting Notes***

A vibrant Merlot is hard to find. A bottle aged Merlot is also hard to find. Put them together and you’ve found a unicorn raised on an organic farm. The 2016 vintage of RSV’s organically farmed Merlot makes for a subtle, nuanced and soulful wine. A wallflower at first, it has initial hints of rose petal, lilac, sage and tart red/black berries. Patience is rewarded as the wine opens with rich, vibrant fruits of black cherry, red currant and black plum that ride a firm backbone of black tea, bay leaf and graphite. A lingering mouth-watering finish leaves a distinct old world impression that suggests rustic, hearty fare and a table full of friends. (02/2023)

**FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.**

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## *A farm story!*

Farming is the organization of the natural world to serve humans. It is not nature. I have long said that RSV works with, not against, the rhythms of nature by farming with the use of animals, cover crops, hedgerows and habitat restoration for the benefit of wild animals, birds, insects... even fungi. We try to overcompensate for the damage we do when we impose our will on the natural world. If the past five years of drought, extreme heat, fires and now monsoon rains are any indication, we clearly haven't done enough. Nature needs our help.

The new year finds us with a new, old farm. It was in the same family for the past 50 years and though the prior owners showed a particular love of nature, some of the land has been overgrazed and compacted while other parts have been neglected and remain wild. To me, it is the perfect canvas to practice what we preach. Can we restore the farm in such a way that encourages wild, natural processes while still creating a superlative wine and other farm products? Can we truly partner with nature so we both can thrive?

Only time can answer these questions but we aim to find out. Our goal is to balance the farm with wild habitat so nature can be natural and do what it does best... create its own checks and balances. The farm is already home to the largest heron rookery in the region and, with the recent rains, we have seen an explosion of wildlife I have not seen in my almost four decades in Napa. I am more optimistic now than I have been in years. The journey is just beginning.

