Robert Sinskey Vineyards

ORGANIC. BIODYNAMIC. REGENERATIVELY GROWN.



Pinot Noir, Three Amigos Vineyard, Los Carneros, Napa Valley 2017

BIG TIME!

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Three Amigos Vineyard Pinot Noir • 2017 • Magnum

I'm going to contradict two common words of wisdom: less is more and younger is better. Less is more when it comes to making wine from beautifully grown grapes or cooking thoughtfully raised meat. And younger has its advantages with produce, seafood, and dairy. But a big bottle of wine makes a good case for more... and for giving it time. A magnum rewards patience, with enough to share with friends over a leisurely dinner.

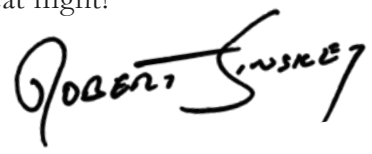
Winegrowing comes down to knowing when to leave things alone. Grow it well and let it express its true nature. That takes care, attention, and the restraint to resist fixing every perceived deficit. When you chase an ideal, you can lose something in the correction: the distinctiveness that defines character. It is easy to confuse a wine with no flaws with "perfection," when what you really want is a wine that has something to say and inspires conversation.

A big bottle of wine is an ideal social lubricant and an antidote to the isolation and stress of these always-on times. It gives us an excuse to slow down, gather, toast, celebrate, reconnect, and share our dreams, aspirations, fears, and opinions. They say therapy is a growth profession; I say we wouldn't need so much therapy if we gathered more with friends and indulged in the ritual of opening a special bottle over a meal. In this instance, more is more.

We make wine, and much of what makes the work worthwhile happens after the bottle leaves our hands. That big bottle travels across the country to be shared by families and friends, many we will never meet. They break bread and open a magnum. Someone tells a story. Someone else has heard it before and lets them tell it anyway. Dinner runs long. The wine reveals itself while all the guests reveal a little more of themselves. Everyone leaves satiated, happy and content.

It's been nine years since the 2017 Three Amigos Vineyard Pinot Noir was harvested. It has had time to come into its own. Elegant and supple, yet still bright and youthful, it belongs at the dinner table, where its character can unfold alongside the meal while you and your friends unwind.

Ideal with dinner. Better with friends. Make a good night a Big Time great night!




A PERFECT CIRCLE
2017
THREE AMIGOS VINEYARD
PINOT NOIR
LOS CARNEROS - NAPA VALLEY
GROWN, PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY
ROBERT SINSKEY VINEYARDS
NAPA, CALIFORNIA USA - ALC 13.8% BY VOL

Pinot Noir, Three Amigos Vineyard, Los Carneros, Napa Valley 2017

The 2017 RSVnapa organic, regeneratively farmed Three Amigos Vineyard Pinot Noir makes a good case for giving wine time. Ripe black cherry mingles with bright raspberry, pomegranate, and red currant. As the wine opens in the glass, rose and orange peel give way to clove, star anise, black tea, and a savory touch of dried porcini. Plenty to discover over a leisurely dinner.

Elegant and supple, with a rounded mid-palate and a long, mouthwatering finish, the wine balances the vintage's generosity with the freshness of its cool Carneros origins. Its character unfolds with air, offering another detail as the meal and conversation carry on.

Thoughtfully raised meat, simply roasted, makes a fine companion: chicken, lamb or a roast surrounded by root vegetables. Mushrooms echo the wine's savory character, while cedar-plank salmon or a rich preparation of turbot meets its supple texture. Bring a few friends to the table and give the magnum room to make a good night great.

Winegrowing Notes

Every time I hear "2017," I suffer a little PTSD. The fires of that year changed our lives and eventually shaped our decision to sell the Stags Leap District winery and bring our operations closer together in the cool Carneros region.

Deep inside the winery, the 2017 Pinot Noir was quietly fermenting. Every Pinot grape had been picked before the fires began. The growing season's work was already in the cellar.

The organically farmed Three Amigos Vineyard in southern Carneros is always the last Pinot Noir vineyard picked. The San Pablo Bay's cooling influence helps temper the heat of warmer vintages, giving the fruit time to develop flavor while retaining its natural brightness. A mix of heirloom and French selections, including Swan, S, M&H, 459, 538 and Pommard, brings together distinct personalities that give this wine something of its own to say.

The fruit was handpicked at night to preserve freshness, gently fermented and tucked away for a year in French oak barrels, 30 percent new. Another four years of bottle age preceded the initial release. These magnums have had more time still.

Grow it well, guide it gently and give it time. Less is more requires a little patience.

HAVE A BALL!

When I was a kid and my parents were entertaining, a port-wine cheese ball seemed to sit at the center of every "fancy" cheese board. Surrounded by thin sheets of Swiss, chunks of Munster and dill Havarti, the ball's mountainous form broke up the ennui of an otherwise pale and one-dimensional board.

Once guests dug into the nut-coated orb, I would behold the unnatural pale pink-violet swirl of tangy-sweet, port-laced cheese lacing the bright orange of the sharp cheddar. How strange a sight, yet how delicious the first bite of salty, crunchy nuts mixed with that mouth-banging, saliva-inducing, tangy, creamy, engineered ball of deliciousness.

I recently decided the cheese ball needed a revisit and a makeover. No port wine involved; replaced with a dry red wine reduced with sugar to counterbalance the cheeses' salty creaminess and fermented tang. I also removed the swirl, making the ball more homogeneous in color and flavor throughout its Rubenesque glory.

I also made it big enough to feed a crowd. And what better way to have a ball than to accompany its magnificence with a big, beautiful magnum of Three Amigos Pinot Noir? The Three Amigos Pinot Noir creates a beautiful interplay of textures, acidity, and flavors and serves as a perfect counterweight to the blend of rich cream cheese and sharp cheddar. Smoky pimentón-toasted pecans, with their warm, earthy aroma and flavor, pair nicely with the wine's sous bois undercurrents. Its bright red-berried notes, with a hint of cranberry, almost work as a compote without the sweetness.

For a nostalgic touch, throw together a big, delicious cheese ball for your next gathering. Many will be delighted to rediscover the joys of a well-prepared homemade cheese ball. Add a magnum of Three Amigos, and you'll ensure everyone has a ball.

Until the next wine… *Maria*







RED WINE CHEESE BALL

Long ago, a port wine cheese ball was the height of fancy. This one tastes way better than what you'd find in stores, without the weird dyes and stabilizers. If you are a fan of great cheese spreads, you owe it to yourself to give this version a try. Serves: 16

8 oz cream cheese, room temperature
8 oz extra-sharp orange cheddar cheese shredded, room temperature
3 oz sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped chives
Kosher salt
1½ tablespoons red wine reduction, recipe follows

For the Nuts
2 cups pecans
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
Pinch of salt
½ teaspoon hot smoked paprika or to taste

1. Cut the cream cheese into rough 1" chunks and place in the bowl of a food processor. Add the shredded cheddar. Pulse to combine coarsely, then process until fully blended.

2. In a small bowl, stir the chopped chives, ½ teaspoon salt, and red wine reduction into the sour cream. With the processor running slowly pour the mixture into the cheese mixture through the feed tube.

3. Process until the cheese mixture is very smooth, about 2 minutes. If needed, add more salt to taste.

4. Lay 2 sheets of plastic wrap overlapping in an "X" on a clean countertop. Use a large spoon to spoon the cheese mixture into the center of the "X".

5. Carefully pull up the ends of the plastic wrap so the wrap surrounds the mixture. Bring the ends together at the top and twist firmly to form the cheese into a ball. Refrigerate, twisted-side-down, until firm, about 4 hours.

6. While the ball is chilling, prepare the pecans.

7. Place a couple layers of paper towels on a plate. Melt the butter in a heavy skillet over medium heat.

8. Add the pecans, salt and the hot smoked paprika. Stir well with a spatula to coat them evenly with butter.

9. Cook, stirring frequently, until the butter starts to foam and the pecans are nicely browned and fragrant, around 3 to 4 minutes.

10. Remove the pan from the heat. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the pecans to the prepared paper towels. Spread out in an even layer to cool. Chop them fairly finely and set aside on a large plate until ready to coat the cheese ball.

11. To Assemble the Red Wine Cheese Ball: Spread the pecans out in an thick even layer on the plate. Remove the cheese ball from the refrigerator, unwrap, and roll in the pecans until evenly coated. You may have to press some of the pecans on with your hands.

12. Wrap the cheese ball in a clean sheet of plastic wrap. Refrigerate if not serving within an hour or two, otherwise let the cheese ball sit at room temp until ready to serve. Serve at room temperature for best flavor and texture. Serve with crackers, crostini, pita chips on the side.



RED WINE REDUCTION

Use extra syrup for dried fruit compote or to drizzle over blue-veined cheeses. Yield: ½ cup

1 cup red wine

¼ cup granulated sugar

Place all ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring to boil over high heat. Reduce heat to a simmer and reduce by half to a light syrup. Cool before using. Store refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

















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