



# Rick's Grape Skinny



June 2016

*“Wine rejoices the heart of man and joy is the mother of all virtues.”*

(Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1771)

## Don't be a Cork Dork!

What's a *Cork Dork*? Well I guess that's a fair question since I brought it up...but let me quickly add that I like *Cork Dorks*! In fact, some of my best friends qualify to be adorned with that moniker! It's just that I worry about some of them because I've seen far too many deny themselves the company and pleasure of some very fine wines – all because they were *Cork Dorks* of one kind or another.

OK...now that we've cleared up my motive for writing this particular *Skinny*, here are those lovable *Cork Dorks* I'm trying to help.

- *Cork Dork – Type A – The Radical Fundamentalist Cork Dork!* These are folks who absolutely and categorically refuse to drink any wine whose bottle is not sealed with a natural cork closure! They prefer to not even enter a room where there's a risk that there might be wines with synthetic corks or, God forbid, screw caps! These are folks who are also prone to yell, *“the sky is falling!”* But hey, that just means there's more great wines for you and me!
- *Cork Dork – Type B – The Olfactory Cork Dork!* These are large-nosed enthusiasts who insist on using their over-sized proboscises to not only smell corks...but screw caps as well! Oh yeah! What's worse is...they insist there is something of value to be learned by plugging a cork into their nostrils...or dipping their beak into a screw cap basin. Oh... and then there's the swooning! Makes me wanna render a knuckle rap! I call these *Cork Dorks* -- *Smell Yays!* Gimme a break!

## The Dorky Truth

Relative to my *Radical Fundamentalist Cork Dork* friends...which I hasten to add that I dearly love...let me say right up front...it's just not true that in order for a wine to be a good one...even an exceptional one...that the bottle must be sealed with natural cork. Do yourselves a favor and open up those closed minds. Then open your mouths and sip away...and trust me, you'll be amazed at the quality of wines whose producers have chosen to not use cork these days. There are many closure types being used in the industry today...and while experts will argue the technical merits and limitations of each 'til the grapes are all picked, here's the bottom line. All closures are made to keep the liquid in and the air out...and guess what...they all do that! At the end of the day, it was the dwindling supply and increasing cost of cork that spawned the use of alternative bottle closures. And the “big advantage” that was claimed by one and all who moved away from cork...was the prevention of “cork taint!” And hey, these alternative closures certainly do that!

For my dearly beloved *Olfactory Cork Dorks*, please do yourselves – and your loved ones -- a huge favor...and commit to never again sniffing the cork or the screw cap of a just-opened bottle of wine in public! Never...Ever! I can't for the life of me even imagine what it is these “*OCDs*” think they might be accomplishing by such a ritual, but one thing is certain: they will learn absolutely nothing, nada, naught, zippo, zero, zilch about the wine! Smell the open bottle if you must...but please put the Corks, Screw Caps, Crown Caps, Vino Seals, and Zorks aside...and simply pour yourself a dab in a glass, swirl it and give it a good look-see, then take in a mighty sniff of that elixir! Then and only then are you ready to drink it all in and all down! Prosit!



# Toast of the Month



*“Here’s to them that fill to the brim  
And to one and all -- young and old.  
And here’s to wine, which everybody knows  
Is good for the body – and even better for the soul!”*  
(Sivad)

## **Don’t Forget Flag Day! June 14<sup>th</sup>**



## **The Monthly Bunch!**

### **White**

#### **Godello**

**Campos Da Néboa 2013**

**Off-dry, Crisp, Fruit-forward, & Deelishioso!  
(Valdeorras D. O. -- Galicia, Spain)/\$12-\$14**

The *Godello* grape (goh - deh’ - oh) has been a rising star in Spain for a good many years...and these days it’s not uncommon to see it described as Spain’s finest white grape and wine. If you’ve never tried it, do yourself a favor and hunt it down...then serve it with either grilled shrimp or scallops...a pairing that is to die for! This is an exceptional expression and it is 100% *Godello* so you’ll be getting the full shebang! For what it’s worth, *Néboa* is this idyllic mist that is typically nestled in the *Valdeorras*, or Valley of Gold. Un-oaked and unfiltered, it was aged for a brief few months *sur lie* which adds elements of both charm and character!

[www.vinergia.com/](http://www.vinergia.com/)

### **White Blend**

**Borealis Northern Whites 2014**

**Off-dry, Fruit-forward and Dazzlingly Delicious!  
(Willamette Valley, Forest Grove, Oregon)/\$13-\$16**

Talk about a dazzlingly delicious and head-turning white wine blend...this is it! This über-flavorful blend of four distinctive white varietals hails from the small family-owned *Montinore Estate Vineyards and Winery*. Noted for their standard-setting and certified organic and biodynamic farming practices, founder Rudy Marchesi and his daughter Kristin are the brains, heart and soul of

*Montinore Estate*...and boy do they ever deliver some great wines! Inspired by the zip, zing and zest of Spain’s *Albariño* and Argentina’s *Torrantes*, this delicious quaff is a mouthwatering mélange of 39% *Gewurztraminer*, 37% *Muller-Thurgau*, 19% *Riesling*, and 5% *Pinot Gris* (aka *Pinot Grigio*). This is one of those wines where a whole bottle can disappear before you know it --like within a few flaps of a hummingbird’s wings! It’s not made every year, so get it when you see it and while you can! You’ll be glad you did!

<http://www.montinore.com/index.html>

### **Rosé**

**Caves d’Esclans *Whispering Angel* 2015**

**Delicate and Mouthwateringly Delicious!**

**(Côtes de Provence – Provence, Fr)/\$16-\$20**

When it comes to exceptional *Rosés* – look no further than to this venerable Chateau and the esteemed winemaker, Sacha Lichine, for some of the world’s finest! This enchanting union of *Grenache*, *Syrah*, *Cinsault*, and *Rolle (Vermentino)* is one of the best and most versatile *Rosé* I’ve had...period. Named after the local 19<sup>th</sup> Century *Whispering Angel Chapel*, each bottle is adorned with – and blessed by -- an image of the twin Cherubs that sit high above the chapel’s apse.

[www.esclans.com/](http://www.esclans.com/)

### **Red**

***Carménère* (Chile’s Signature Grape)**

**Viña Santa Carolina *Reserva de Familia* 2009**

**Inky Dark, Complex, and Sinfully Sophisticated!  
(Rapel Valley – Macul, Chile)/\$16-\$22**

You aren’t likely to find many 2009 wines on the shelves these days, but regardless of vintage, this is one of those very distinctive wines, featuring the famous *Lost Grape of Bordeaux*, which, as many of you know, is my favorite red grape and wine! Founded in 1875 by Don Luis Pereira, *Viña Santa Carolina* was Wine Enthusiast’s New World Winery of the Year for 2015. This expression of 100% *Carménère* was aged for 12 months in new French oak...and trust me, you cannot find a better wine to pair with any cut of beef -- regardless of how it might be prepared. Heck, it even pairs well with *Carpaccio* or *Ceviche*!

<http://www.santacarolina.cl/>