

Kunin Sauvignon Blanc, McGinley Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley

- One of top Sauvignon Blanc vineyards in California
- Kunin has a long history of getting the best results from this site
- Mix of stainless and barrel fermentation capture subtle elusive flavors without green notes

The Producer

Seth Kunin embodies all of the aspects we look for in a producer—small production, hand crafted, site specific wines that naturally find their place at the table and consistently outperform their pricepoints. The wines also are a perfect embodiment of him as a winemaker, as they present noted Central Coast vineyards through the prism of the wines of Rhone and Loire valleys that inspired him as a sommelier. It's no wonder that Kunin's Syrahs, Grenache, Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc are found on the best winelists in America.

Owner and winemaker Seth Kunin developed his passion for great wine while working in the restaurant business at Santa Barbara's legendary Wine Cask. The international scope of the wine program led him to fall in love with the food friendly style of French wines and his proximity to the vineyards of Santa Barbara drove him to attempt to make similar wines on his own. Pursuing his dream to make wine he apprenticed at Gainey Vineyard in Santa Ynez Valley. Here he learned the art of winemaking and became intimately familiar with Santa Barbara's terroir. He started Kunin Wines in 1998 with a vision to make authentic expressions of Santa Barbara terroir—with a focus on varietals of the Loire and Rhone valleys. Through his many connections in the wine community, he established partnerships with growers of choice sites for each varietal, allowing him to quickly distinguish his wines for their quality.

The East-West valleys of Santa Barbara provide tremendous diversity of sites. While Pinot and Chardonnay thrive in the coastal areas and Bordeaux varieties flourish in the East, Syrah and Grenache have found their home in the center. Within this center region, Kunin primarily focuses on famous sites including Lerner vineyard in the new Ballard Canyon AVA, Alisos Vineyard in Los Alamos and Jurassic Park and McGinley in Santa Ynez Valley. This area is the sweet spot that is warm enough for Rhone and Loire varieties without losing the crisp acidity that defines his style.

Meticulous farming of great vineyard sites allows Kunin to strike a balance of ripeness and acidity to produce wines of exceptional elegance that will age gracefully and pair well with food. In the cellar, intervention is minimal with oak use rare and mostly used. Kunin believes that the vineyards can tell their own story without much assistance from the winemaker.

While allowing vintages to be uniquely expressed, quality is always paramount, and Kunin lets vintage quality dictate production levels. Annual production is around 5800 cases.

The Wine

Sauvignon Blanc is often seen as a workhorse grape that doesn't always get single-vineyard designation the way Pinot Noir, Cabernet or Chardonnay do. Seth Kunin has been working with Westerly/McGinley vineyard for years first as the estate winemaker for the Westerly brand and then on his own. He understands the vineyard and has experience getting the most from this great site. Seth's constant experimentation and study has shown him that a mix of cold stainless and warm barrel fermentation allow the wine to develop elusive floral and currant notes while avoiding the pungent green notes often associated with the variety. This also gives the wine a soft round texture while preserving the fresh zip of acidity. This wine stands among the top expressions of the grape in California.



Region: Santa Barbara

Appellation: Happy Canyon AVA

Vineyards: McGinley vineyard

Soil: Clay loam, cobbles of red chert and serpentine

Alcohol: 13.5%

Varietals: 100% Sauvignon Blanc

Vine age: 2005

Planting system: VSP, cane trained Cordon

Vine density: 1560-4150 vines per acre

Production: 284cs

Vinification: 100% whole cluster pressed to tank. Cold-settled overnight, racked off gross lees. Fermented and aged, sur lees, in barrel for six months.

Agging: 50% neutral (6+ yrs) French oak / 50% stainless steel

Tasting Notes: Not as overtly grapefruit-scented as previous vintages from this site, this SB has a varietal nose of tropical fruit and citrus, with just a hint of grass. The palate is pleasantly rich, but balanced by good acidity and a very clean finish.

We provide great restaurants and retailers with wines they are proud to serve and keep their guests coming back for more.