



B. Kosuge Wines

2011 Hirsch Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2011 was my tenth vintage working with Hirsch Vineyard. I firmly believe that it takes time to fully understand a vineyard if you go about making wine the way I do—by paying attention to the grape, and not imposing one's own style upon it. You only get to do it once a year, and the dance is a complicated one that requires practice and patience to get the steps right. Once in a while you get lucky and get it right the first time, but most of the time it takes reflection, adjustment and humility.

I've been lucky to work with this vineyard for so long, and feel like I am "getting it" now. It's a challenging site because the weather is extreme out on the coast where it is, making the vintages much more variable than further inland. Understanding how the fruit is going to behave once it is in the winery is harder than in other places. It's more temperamental. But it's also more expressive and the wine always has an energy that is hard to describe and rare among California vineyards. That's why it is a special place.

I've written elsewhere that the 2011 season was a bit of a paradox—conditions that should have led to problematic wines but instead resulted in fresh, aromatic, complex, concentrated (but not "big") and balanced wines. I'm super keen on my 2011 Hirsch. It is a little closed now, only showing a portion of the exotic spice and wild berry fruit that is typical of the site. What I like best about it is the energy and freshness on the palate. It has what some folks like to call "nervosity;" it feels alive and vibrant. Rare for California wine.

56 cases