



B. Kosuge Wines

2011 "The Shop" Carneros Pinot Noir

If you have heard anything bad about the 2011 vintage I can assure you that, for early varieties like Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, those bad things are simply not true. 2011 is one of my favorite vintages of the last decade. I will concede that the growing season was hard—growers fought with mildew, the season was late and the crop small. The resulting wines are vibrant, fresh and balanced, and ripe but not jammy. Classic wines, you might say. I always say that the hardest thing to achieve in California is freshness, energy and precision, and the 2011 Pinots and Chardonnays have that across the board.

More and more these days I am looking for wine that is refreshing, aromatic and pure. Power and size are no longer so appealing. Even though the Shop is always a pretty big wine, it carries itself with grace. As has been the case for my entire career, I make this wine as naturally as possible—the better to encourage the fullest expression of the fruit, to keep it fresh and honest. But I don't want to be too serious about it, and lately when I have tasted the wine it seems like the kind of wine you could down a bottle of without even thinking. Not that I am advocating chugging it. Carneros Pinot Noir always has a dark fruit component, something almost licorice-like, and that is here, in the background, along with other dark fruits. But there is spice and fresh fruit on top of it that keeps it lively. On the palate, ripe but fresh. 400 cases.