



B. Kosuge Wines

2008 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

Although the 2008 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay is not labeled as a vineyard designate, it is in fact comprised entirely of grapes from the La Cruz Vineyard. La Cruz is the home vineyard for Keller Estate winery and is located on a west facing slope in the hills on the east side of the Petaluma River, southeast of the town of Petaluma. It is breezy and cool. From the hill where my Chardonnay grows you have a commanding view of the southern part of Sonoma County. It's a good place to contemplate the life of a grapevine. The Sonoma Coast appellation is quite large, extending from the ridges along the Pacific Ocean inland through parts of the Sonoma Valley as well as the Petaluma River drainage, where La Cruz is located. The soils here are old bay sediments, very growth-limiting, so yields are modest. I usually pick the grapes around the end of September, which is towards the end of Chardonnay season in the north coast and speaks to the mild climate of the site. Alcohol levels remain moderate here, speaking to the mildness of the microclimate, and, more importantly, even when fully ripe, the fruit retains brightness, freshness and acidity.

My 2008 Chardonnay was made in the usual hands-off manner that I have employed for more than twenty years of making the variety for others. The juice was chilled down after pressing and sent directly to barrels to ferment. Nothing added. My only intervention was to filter the wine just prior to bottling in order to brighten it up a bit. The wine is juicy and fresh, with subtle toasty and mineral notes. It is pretty full bodied, but has enough of a backbone from the acidity (thanks to the clone 4) that it is not ponderous. It tastes like the grape, not the barrel. 240 cases made.