



## *B. Kosuge Wines*

### **2009 Hirsch Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir**

2009 is the best vintage in recent memory for Pinot Noir. You can quote me on that. Of course, the caveat is that what I consider a great vintage for Pinot Noir is not necessarily what others will consider a great vintage. Most vintages that are rated highly are ones where the grapes achieve a high degree of ripeness, high concentration and high alcohol. 2009 did indeed give very concentrated wines but without high alcohol levels. For me the most exciting aspect of the 2009 Pinot Noirs is their freshness, purity and aromatic intensity. Time will tell, of course, but when I sniff and taste the 2009s I can hardly wait to bring them out in the world.

Hirsch vineyard is always the most complicated of my Pinot Noirs. I mean that in a good way. Spring weather out on the extreme Sonoma Coast is always unpredictable and "set," the time when the grape vine blossoms are fertilized and become berries, is always difficult compared to regions further inland, where the climate is milder. What this means is that crops are almost always small, with uneven sized berries. Uneven berry size is a little tricky to manage later in the season as harvest approaches because the small berries tend to ripen more quickly than the larger ones, so you need to wait for the larger berries to fully ripen while at the same time not letting the smaller berries become overripe. This balancing act is made easier if the weather at harvest time is mild, so that the more mature fruit does not get damaged while waiting for the slowpokes to catch up. This was exactly the case in 2009 at Hirsch, and the resultant wine is deeply colored and tightly packed with extract and fruit. At the moment, it's kind of tightly wound, and needs a little air for the aromas to unfold. I recently had a bottle open for a full day, pouring samples for folks on a sales trip, and by the end of the day the wine was beautifully expressive, bursting with wild cherry, spice and minerals. I don't think I am exaggerating when I say that this is the best Hirsch Pinot I've made to date. 105 cases.