



B. Kosuge Wines

2010 Hirsch Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

A year ago I wrote that the 2009 Hirsch was the best Hirsch of my career. I now need to amend that to say that the 2010 is the best Hirsch of my career. Or more accurately, it best captures what I consider special about the vineyard—intense, concentrated but not heavy. I’ve written elsewhere that 2010 was kind of a head scratcher of a vintage—it seemed good, in that the fruit was in excellent shape, tasted good and was balanced, but I was not expecting how pure and delicious the wines would turn out to be, with a little barrel age. I actually like them better than my 2009s, which at the time of their release I thought could not be topped!

About a month ago, I appeared at the International Pinot Noir Celebration up in Oregon. This is sort of the grand daddy of all Pinot Noir tastings, and draws winemakers from California, Oregon and of course, Burgundy, as well as many fans of those wines, including those who collect, write about and review Pinot Noir based wines from around the globe. A tough audience to be sure. I was lucky enough to be chosen to appear on a panel, talking about my experiences as a “flying winemaker,” working both in California and in Chile during our off-season. In addition to the seminars, there are big tastings where all the attendees get to taste a vast selection of wines presented by all the participating wineries. I chose to feature the 2010 Hirsch at the tastings—wanted to put my best foot forward. I am happy to report that I got many kind words about the wine, and no less authority than Robert Kacher, Burgundy importer, described it in one word: Bravo. I took that as a compliment. I hope he doesn’t mind my quoting him on this. 75 cases.