



B. Kosuge Wines

2018 Carneros Gamay Noir

If 2017 was a year of extremes (heat, rain, fire), 2018 was the opposite. Mild to warm, fewer heat waves than normal, a very forgiving growing season. Cool climate loving varieties like Gamay and Pinot Noir like this kind of weather, and the Gamay in particular shone in 2018. Although the crop was a bit larger than the last few years, there is no drop off in concentration. The fruit came in the door looking about as good as it gets—clean, deeply colored, plump berries but fairly loose clusters. After three years of making Gamay I have found that I like fermenting the fruit whole, stems and all. Simply putting it in the fermenters straight off the sorting line, stomping it down by foot a bit to free up some juice and level out the pile of grape clusters in the vat and then letting it ferment on its own. I don't encourage—or discourage--carbonic maceration. The vineyard where the Gamay comes from always produces fruit that has an enviable balance of sugar and acid so no adjustments are ever necessary.

With all the wines I make, I am part traditionalist and part tinkerer. With this wine I hope to capture the things that I love about Cru Beaujolais without slavishly imitating it. I've been aging it mostly in a concrete egg, with a few neutral barrels. I find that I generally prefer the wine when it's aged in concrete, at least so far, but whether that is truly traditional in Beaujolais I don't know and to some extent don't care. It works with the fruit I have, and that is good enough for me.

My Gamay always has a very low pH for a red wine. While you can't necessarily taste pH, it does allow me to use very low levels of sulfur (SO₂ is more effective at low pH). It isn't "natural wine" but it has very little added to it: no yeast, no bacteria, no acid, no sugar, no new oak. The flavors are fresh and lively and are all derived from the grape, nothing else. Pretty primal stuff, just the way I like it. 120 cases produced.