



*B. Kosuge Wines*

2004 HIRSCH VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST PINOT NOIR

The label has a picture of a long and winding road. David Hirsch somehow found this spot some years ago and even more improbably planted it to Pinot Noir grapevines. Now, the vineyard is famous but I am sure at the time it seemed like folly to plant anything so far out in the middle of nowhere. That is what inspired the picture.

But the real inspiration is to experience the single mindedness that David brings to his vineyard. When I make the long drive out there to snoop around, he's nearly always out in the field, working the land, thinking about the vines. He has stacks of handwritten notes about each block of vines. Sometimes when we chat I'm unable to follow what he's saying because too many ideas are pouring out all at once. During harvest, he's the one driving the tractor, pulling leaves from the bins of grapes. Not afraid to get dirty. It's all about the wine for this guy - and I'm drawn to that.

Farming on the edge of the continent has its drawbacks though. The coastal ridges intercept a lot of moisture during the winter, and they can get 60 inches of rain—or more—in a wet year. The area also has a tendency to be cold in the spring; so poor set and small crops occur much more often than further inland. But the wines from this place (David was kind enough to let me taste a bunch of them, going back to 1996, from a variety of producers including Kistler, Littorai and Williams Selyem) have a wildness about them that is pretty compelling. I hope that my small offering is a worthy successor to those wines.

The spring of 2004 was cold and wet out on the coast, and the result is that I only got about a quarter of the quantity of grapes that I was hoping to get. The clusters were ridiculously small. I ended up with a paltry 64 six-bottle cases of this wine...but it's good.