



B. Kosuge Wines

2004 THE SHOP
CARNEROS PINOT NOIR

It's popular these days to talk about the vineyard first and last and in-between. While there's certainly no doubt that the grapes and where they're grown is important, it seems to me that the people—those who tend the vines, drive the tractors, whose vision led them to plant in some unlikely places, and most importantly those who embrace the hard work and devotion that is required to grow and make fine wine—tend to be forgotten. Terroir, after all, is the nexus where soil, climate and man (woman too) come together.

This is the story behind The Shop, and its prosaic name: Some years ago I worked at Saintsbury in Carneros. During that time I got to know a group of guys who worked for a company called Walsh Vineyards Management. They farmed all the estate vineyards (excellently, I might add) and I made a pest of myself by asking questions and generally trying to pick their brains as much as possible in order to improve my knowledge, and better understand the wines from those vineyards. A few years later, two of these same men, Brian Shepard and Tim Rodgers, (who have since bought the company), planted a small vineyard next to their vineyard equipment shop. This spot is a hub of activity for both the managers and the field workers; you will often see dusty pickups come and go, tractors lined up in neat rows awaiting the next harvest, various devices that till the soil, mow down cover crops, and so forth, plus a vegetable garden where the field workers raise peppers, tomatoes, corn and sometimes even chickens and goats. Kind of a microcosm of good old honest work, or so it seemed to me.

Now, since I had spent most of my career making Carneros Pinot Noir, I was eager to test the waters outside of the appellation. But I couldn't resist the down to earth charms of "The Shop" and the fact that my highly skilled but not glamorous friends were growing these grapes. So I agreed to buy the grapes, and have dedicated the wine to all that the shop embodies—the real work of growing winegrapes.

About the wine: I wanted this wine, first and foremost, to taste like Pinot Noir. Vibrant and aromatic, with "cut" and nerve. Not heavy and dull. If it could be a little serious too, that would be great but most importantly it needed to be something I wanted to drink myself. There's a measure of whole clusters, moderate use of oak (but it is French), nice brightness and acidity. If you are the patient type, it should reward laying down for a while as well.

P.O. Box 5413, Napa, CA 94581 Tel: 707.738.8396 Fax: 707.265.8625

www.bkosugewines.com | byron@bkosugewines.com