



B. Kosuge Wines

2006 THE SHOP
CARNEROS PINOT NOIR

This is the story behind The Shop, and its prosaic name: Several 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 Saintsbury 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 struck a deal to buy the grapes, and have dedicated the wine to all that the shop embodies—the real work of growing winegrapes.

About the 2006 Shop: This wine has been the hit of the lineup from the first vintage. I have always viewed it as the best example among my offerings of the kind of wine I want to drink—reasonably priced, sophisticated, maybe a little serious but mostly just yummy. Those who know the 2005 will find the 2006 a bit more restrained. Like the 2005, on the palate it is juicy and forward, with dark fruit and spice in the aromas, but not quite as flamboyant as the 2005. To me it seems a bit more pure and focused. If you are the patient type, it should reward laying down for a while. 590 cases this year.