



## TASTING NOTES FROM BYRON KOSUGE, CONSULTING WINEMAKER



### 2007 CARIBLANCO SAUVIGNON BLANC

Production: 1,385 cases  
Alcohol: 14.5%

91 points – W & S

The 2007 has the same vibrant lemon peel and grapefruit notes as the 2006 but with a little blossomy sweetness, as well, in the aromas. Our Sauvignon Blanc fruit always has a mineral note which, as a California winemaker, I find very intriguing (it being difficult to find minerality in Californian Sauvignon Blanc). On the palate, it's quite rich and voluptuous, with mouthwatering acidity that keeps things lively. I am not one prone to hyperbole, but this could well be the definitive expression of Sauvignon Blanc from our vineyard.

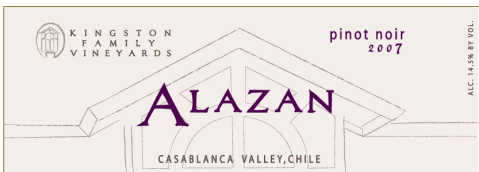


### 2008 TOBIANO PINOT NOIR

Production: 2,275 cases  
Alcohol: 14.5%

Released Fall 2009

I have always taken pride in offering good, serious (well a little serious anyway) wine for a reasonable price. The 2008 Tobiano is definitely a little serious, with loads of ripe raspberry, strawberry and cherry pie flavors and aromas as well as the usual “*gout de Casablanca*,” which I often call a savory or mineral or smoky note. It is this savory note that I think lends a little seriousness to the wine, and separates it from the more straightforwardly fruity Pinot Noirs that I work with here at home in California. It is a fairly big wine, and like all the Kingston reds, it will benefit from a little air. But I would say that it is more a wine for enjoying now, while it is youthful and fresh, than it is for laying down. ¡Salud!



### 2007 ALAZAN PINOT NOIR

Production: 645 cases  
Alcohol: 14.5%

90 points – WS, WE

The 2007 Alazan Pinot is perhaps the most concentrated and intense Pinot we have ever made—but it will take a bit longer to show its stuff. It is comprised mostly of grapes from a small berried, low yielding selection of Pinot Noir from the more mature part of our vineyard. Deeply colored and a bit tight for now, but with a tightly wound core of black fruit and the smoky spice typical of the Kingston vineyard, this one is definitely one to lay down for a bit. If you like your wine young, I'd decant it. I often think our wines, when young, taste better either later the day they are opened or even the next day, so if you don't finish the bottle the first night, you might be surprised how it tastes *on the second!*

(over)



### **2007 LUCERO SYRAH**

Production: 700 cases  
Alcohol: 14.5%

*92 points – W & S, 90 points – WS*

To minimize confusion in the Tobiano brand, we decided to give our Tobiano Syrah its own “horse name.” Lucero, which means a star-like marking on a horse, is the new Tobiano Syrah. The 2007 wines were, across the board, some of the most intense, concentrated, low-yielding wines we have ever made. The red wines will be slower to show themselves, and are a bit more shy at this stage than the 2006 wines were in their youth. Definitely decant the 07 Lucero to let it breathe a bit—it is a surprisingly serious wine, deeply colored and very concentrated. It has the same hallmark meat and smoke characters on top of black fruits with a firm backbone of acidity that all the Syrahs from the Kingston vineyard display, just more of it than usual.



### **2006 BAYO OSCURO SYRAH**

Production: 470 cases  
Alcohol: 14.5%

*92 points – W & S; 91 points – Tanzer  
Decanter Trophy & Gold Medal*

We took a vintage off from Bayo in 2005, but are back with a 2006 that might be the best Syrah we have made to date. 2006 was an excellent vintage, giving us wines of great fruit purity and lovely aromas, across the board. The 2006 vintage was the first to be made in our new winery, so for the first time we were masters of our own destiny (well, as much as you can be in winemaking!).

Beating the drum for cool climate Syrah can be a lonely occupation, but when a wine like this comes around I am reminded of how fantastic cool climate new world Syrah can be. It is definitely not “imitation Hermitage,” but its own creature, ripe on the palate and “*savage*,” meaty and spicy in the aromas and flavors. And like always, the color is an unbelievably saturated deep red. But for all the intensity of color, aroma and flavor, it is surprisingly gentle on the tongue, fleshy, broad and rich. It’s a mouthful, and will definitely reward laying down for several years. And because this wine is unfiltered so we could retain its complete handcrafted character, we recommend decanting before serving in case natural sediments have formed.