



SCHUG
CARNEROS ESTATE
SONOMA · CALIFORNIA

"Great Pinot Noir is not defined by the density of its color, the intensity of its flavors, or even its ability to age.

The first duty of great Pinot

Noir is to prove a farmer right

-- to express in its character

that it derives from a well-

placed vine. Schug Carneros

Estate is a winery based on

the notion that the Carneros

region is one of the few places

in the world where a Pinot

Noir farmer can be proved

absolutely right."

Walter Schug,

Owner/Winemaster

SCHUG CARNEROS ESTATE: PINOT NOIR AND THE PERFECTION OF A WELL-PLACED VINE

Walter Schug was intimately familiar with the Carneros region, and its potential as world-class Pinot Noir country, long before he staked his reputation on it. In the 1960's he worked with Carneros grapegrowers as Gallo's Head of Grower Relations. In the 1970's and 1980's he produced wine from Carneros as winemaker at Joseph Phelps Vineyards. In 1983, Walter's commitment to the young region's potential was fully demonstrated when he left Phelps to pursue his own vision of Pinot Noir, using Carneros as the foundation for his own brand.

REFLECTING AND RESPECTING THE CARNEROS TERROIR

Today Walter's vision is in full view of Pinot Noir lovers located across the globe. Schug Carneros Estate produces 25,000 cases of wine annually, the majority of which is Carneros-grown Pinot Noir from the estate and other select vineyards in the region. The winery is designed in a "post and beam" architectural style that harkens back to Walter and Gertrud Schug's German roots, and its 5,000 square feet of underground caves lie beneath a knoll on the Sonoma side of the Carneros appellation. Here the Schug team pursues its goal of producing wines that respect and reflect the terroir of Carneros.

The Schug brand was founded in 1980, and from the beginning was based on producing Pinot Noir. Though he received worldwide recognition at Phelps for the Eisele Vineyard Cabernets, the groundbreaking "Insignia" Cabernet blend, acclaimed late harvest Rieslings and California's first Syrah, Walter also made Pinot Noir from the Heinemann Mountain Vineyard in Napa Valley. Having grown up on the German Pinot Noir estate of Assmannshausen where his father was the winemaker, Walter's love of the grape came early on. When Phelps dropped Pinot Noir from the portfolio in 1980, Walter bought the grapes himself and started his own brand. Three years later he left Phelps to pursue his love of Pinot Noir.

COMMITMENT TO THE CARNEROS REGION AND PINOT NOIR

In the early 1980s the market for Pinot Noir was quite limited, which prompted the addition of Chardonnay to the young brand. By 1989 Schug Winery had outgrown its original production facility in Yountville, leading Walter and Gertrud to look for land in Carneros to build their new winery and plant their own grapes. That year they purchased 50 acres of land south of the town of Sonoma, planted 38 acres of vines and began construction of their winery. The 1991 vintage saw the first crush at the new facility and in the same year the name of their winery was changed to reflect its true focus: Schug Carneros Estate.

During the 1990s the winery's own vineyards came into production, providing a significant portion of the grapes crushed at the new facility. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from neighboring Sangiacomo Vineyards were added to the winery's growing production. Underground caves were completed in 1995, giving greater flexibility to the winemaking process and accommodating the increased Pinot Noir production. That was also the year that Sonoma native Michael Cox joined Schug as Winemaker, to help manage the brand's growth in both quality and size.

As Winemaster, Walter continues to oversee production as well as vineyard management. Gertrud handles financial matters and their son Axel directs sales and marketing. Today Schug's wines are sold in most states, as well as in Canada, Japan and Europe, where daughter Claudia imports and sells the family's wines.

Walter Schug's vision for Pinot Noir has been nurtured for nearly 50 years in both Europe and California. The Schug family and its brand now enter a third decade firmly rooted in the soils of Carneros.