

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2014 PINOTAGE · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST



From our mountain vineyard that overlooks the Sonoma Coast in the Fort Ross-Seaview American Viticultural Area, Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery produces limited quantities of single vineyard, Estate grown, cool-climate Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinotage. With spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean less than one mile away, the vineyard is divided into 32 separate blocks, one-half to two acres in size, that range in elevation from 1700 down to 1200 feet above sea level. Owners, Lester and Linda Schwartz with their small crew began preparing the 52 acre vineyard in 1994. It took them 4 years of preparation before they could begin planting. The year 2000 marked the first vintage from the Fort Ross Vineyard.

VINTAGE: 2014 was the third year of bountiful harvests that again produced stellar wine of vibrancy and concentration. Protected from the drought by the late winter rains that quickly filled our pond, we could enjoy one of the few luxuries of being off the grid. As we train our grapes to grow on cordons, with evenly positioned buds that produce evenly placed shoots, we drop clusters that are not perfectly positioned. We worked through the vineyard three times to ensure that the bunches had optimal air circulation and sun exposure. The depth of flavor in the wines from this vintage reflect our meticulous handwork. August 17 marked the beginning of the harvest with picking a select block of Pinot Noir Dijon 777 for our Sparkling Wine. The remaining Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinotage ripened quickly and evenly and was harvested through September.

WINEMAKING: Pinotage was first developed in South Africa in 1925 by crossing the two vinifera varieties, Pinot Noir and Cinsault which was called Hermitage at the time. Our Pinotage consists of two Fort Ross proprietary clones, MM1 and MM3, developed at UC Davis from budwood personally imported by Fort Ross from one of the most select Pinotage vineyards in South Africa. The grapes for this Pinotage were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in small two-gallon picking trays. After hand sorting, the fruit was cold soaked for several days and fermented in a single 5 ton tank. During fermentation, the wine was pumped over and sparingly punched down, to carefully control the amount of extraction from the thicker skins in order to produce a well-balanced, age-worthy Pinotage. Shortly after pressing, the wine was barreled in 100% neutral French oak.

TASTING NOTES: While Pinotage shares many traits with Pinot Noir, there is an earthy brambleness that distinguishes it from its more famous cousin. Dense aromas of dark berries and leather mingle with underlying notes of spice and sandalwood. This inky, nearly opaque Pinotage has a concentrated depth of bold flavors that envelop the palate. Tiers of black cherry, cassis and black plum are enhanced by a hints of saffras, black pepper and forest floor. The defined dark berried fruit is in complete harmony with the firm tannins, tight acidity and lengthy finish. The layered textural complexities and intensity pair beautifully with exotic spices, Italian food, as well as smoked and grilled meats. Prior to release, this wine was patiently cellared until optimal, yet it's structure allow it to cellar for years to come.

COMPOSITION: 100% Pinotage
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Proprietary Clones MM1 and MM3
AGING: 10 months in 100% Neutral French oak.
HARVESTED: September 23—24, 2014
BOTTLING: August, 2015, Unfined & Unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 507 cases, 750 ml
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni