

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

2012 PINOT NOIR SYMPOSIUM · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

OVERVIEW

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 and their small crew began preparing the 55 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

The 2012 vintage got off to a very slow start. It was cold and wet throughout the spring so the buds did not swell until surprisingly late in the season. As budbreak was so late, the weather was generally warm and stable during bloom – except for one worrying rainy day that did not affect the crop – only our composure. With such a late start to the vintage, there was less time left to ripen the grapes so we dropped a fair amount of fruit early on so that each vine would have less fruit to ripen and the harvest would not stretch on into inclement weather. The season veered between cold and extreme heat. We harvested when the weather was cooler and we were very satisfied with the high quality of the fruit.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Pinot Noir were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in 2 gallon trays. After hand sorting, the fruit was cold soaked for several days and fermented in a combination of 5 and 10 ton tanks. The caps were punched down 1 or 2 times per day, depending on the stage of the fermentation. The wines were then barreled in a combination of 20% new and 80% neutral French oak. Throughout the 10 months of barrel aging, the clones and different vineyard lots were kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components as blending elements. The wine was bottled unfinned & unfiltered. After extensive blending trials we decided on 96% Pinot Noir with 4% Pinotage.

TASTING NOTES

This Symposium Pinot Noir is a dazzling garnet hue with ruby tones. Perfumed bright black raspberry, blueberry and violet aromas linger with hints of baking spice and the grounding earthy bramble that can be attributed to the 4% addition of Pinotage. The luxurious entry offers complex layers of raspberry and dark plum that intermingle with a whisper of warm sassafras spice. The structure is seductive with a lush mid-palate and controlled tannins. There is purity to the lingering finish where the vineyard's signature minerality and acidity accompany the expansive fruit with great finesse.

COMPOSITION: 96% Pinot Noir · 4% Pinotage
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Calera, Pommard & Dijon clone 777 ~ Pinotage: MM1
AGING: 10 months in 100% French oak; 20% new
ALCOHOL: 13.8%
BOTTLING: Unfinned & Unfiltered
HARVESTED: September 2-29, 2012
BOTTLED: August 2013
CASES PRODUCED: 403 cases
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni