

FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

2009 PINOT NOIR SYMPOSIUM · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · SONOMA COAST · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW

OVERVIEW

From our mountain vineyard, now part of the new Fort Ross-Seaview American Viticultural Area that includes the few steep mountain top vineyards that overlook the Sonoma Coast, 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 30 separate blocks, one-half to two acres in size, that rapidly fall from 1700 down to 1200 feet above sea level. Owners, Lester and Linda Schwartz and their small crew began preparing the 50 acre vineyard in 1994. It took them 4 years of preparation before they could begin planting the first vines in 1998.

VINTAGE

2009 was an excellent year for the early ripening Pinot Noir and Chardonnay on the Sonoma Coast. The year began with a warm January but soon turned cold. The year was generally cooler than usual throughout the major part of the growing season and this coolness gave the wines their vibrant character. In the 3rd week of September there was a heat spike that concentrated the flavors that had been teasingly on the verge. The entire vineyard was harvested in four exhausting days to capitalize on the even ripening, intense flavors and luscious fruit. All grapes were harvested and in barrel before the damaging rains of October.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Pinot Noir were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in 5 gallon buckets. 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 25% new and 75% neutral French oak. Throughout the 10 months of barrel aging, the clones and different vineyard blocks were kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components as blending elements. The wine was bottled unfined & unfiltered. After extensive blending trials we decided on 97% Pinot Noir and 3% Pinotage.

TASTING NOTES

Vivid aromas of dark fruit with tiers of dusty cedar and black tea notes introduce this firm, focused, intense Pinot Noir. The 3% of Pinotage adds layers of sandalwood and earthy bramble to the concentrated core of dark berry, wild berry and black plum. There is purity to the finish where the vineyard's signature minerality and acidity accompany the expansive fruit with great finesse.

COMPOSITION: 97% Pinot Noir, 3% Pinotage
APPELLATION: Sonoma Coast : Fort Ross-SeaView AVA
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Pinot Noir: Dijon clones 115 with 777 - Pinotage: Clones MM1 and MM3
AGING: 10 months in 100% French oak; 25% new
ALCOHOL 14.1%
BOTTLING: Unfined & Unfiltered
HARVESTED: September 21, 2009 - September 24, 2009
BOTTLED: August, 2010
RELEASE DATE: December, 2011
CASES PRODUCED: 515 cases 750 ml
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni