

FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

2004 CHARDONNAY · RESERVE · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · SONOMA COAST

OVERVIEW

From our mountain vineyard on the “True Sonoma Coast”, Fort Ross Vineyard produces limited amounts of 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 28 separate blocks, one-half to two acres in size, traversing elevations ranging from 1200 to 1700 feet above sea level. Owners, Lester and Linda Schwartz and their small crew began preparing the 44 acre vineyard in 1994 and planting began in 1998.

VINTAGE

After a very early budbreak and warm weather that accelerated vine development it looked as if we would have a bountiful crop, however the weather turned cold during bloom and there was a very light berry set. Some blocks ultimately produced only a half a ton per acre. The climate was then moderate for most of the growing season but during August and early September there was a period of unusually hot and dry weather. Being so near to the ocean we were able to wait for the desired level of ripeness and fortunately the weather cooled off. The vineyard’s marine-moderated climate allowed the grapes to ripen slowly and fully into mid-late September when we harvested small berries with complete flavor development and lively acidity.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Chardonnay were handpicked in the cool early morning hours in small five-gallon buckets. Once at the winery, the fruit was hand sorted and then whole cluster pressed. After pressing, the wine underwent barrel and malolactic fermentation in a combination of new and 1 year used French oak. Once the final blend was determined, the wine was raked and bottled without fining or filtration to maintain the natural flavor, texture and youthfulness of the wine. The final blend of this Reserve Chardonnay was selected from individual barrels chosen for their fruit concentration, complexity and balance. This wine is comprised of 60% old Wente, which is fruity and graceful and 40% small berried old Hyde field selection for its richness and sleek structure.

TASTING NOTES

Expansive aromas of perfumed peach blossoms, orange melon, apricot crumble and caramelized hazelnuts lure the senses, leading to a core of complex flavors built around lemon curd and delicately spiced poached pears. This golden hued wine has a seductively soft texture that is perfectly balanced by just the right amount of lively acidity and minerality, characteristic of the vineyard. The initial roundness evolves seamlessly through the long, elegant finish. This sleek and well-structured Burgundian-style wine will continue to evolve for many years.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION: Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: 60% Wente field selections - 40% Old Hyde
AGING: 17 months French; 30 % new oak
ALCOHOL 14%
ACIDITY: .52 g/100ml
pH: 3.70
BOTTLING: Unfined and unfiltered
BOTTLED: March 2006
HARVESTED: October 4-8, 2004
RELEASE DATE: March 2007
CASES PRODUCED: 234 cases 750ml