

FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

2003 PINOT NOIR · 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

Following the near perfect vintage of 2002, 2003 lived up to the challenge and provided Fort Ross with wonderfully ripe Pinot Noir. Although there were significant heat waves in early September 2003, the vineyard's marine-moderated climate allowed the Pinot Noir to ripen slowly and fully into early October.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Pinot Noir were handpicked in the cool early morning hours in 5 gallon buckets. After hand sorting, the fruit was cold soaked for several days and fermented in a combination of 1 and 5 ton fermenters. The caps were punched down 1, 2 or 3 times per day, depending on the stage of the fermentation. The wines were then barreled in a combination of 50% new and 50% used French oak. Throughout the 15 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 unfinned and unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

Our 2003 Pinot Noir offers an intriguing mix of fruit and spice notes ranging from raspberry and rose petal to cola and ripe black cherry. The wine is a reflection of the slow ripening that took place during the unusually long 2003 vintage. As the wine rests in the glass, the complex flavors continue to evolve and unfold. This well structured, full-bodied wine has supple tannins that continue through the powerful and lingering finish.

COMPOSITION: 100% Pinot Noir
SELECTIONS: Calera, Pommard, Swan, Dijon clones 115 and 777
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
AGING: 15 months in 100% French; 50% new
ALCOHOL 14.7%
ACIDITY: .56 g/100ml
pH: 3.49
BOTTLING: Unfinned and unfiltered
BOTTLED: February 1, 2005
CASES PRODUCED: 600 cases 750 ml, 75 cases 12/375 ml
RELEASE DATE: Summer 2006