

FORT ROSS IN THE NEWS

WINE ENTHUSIAST
MAGAZINE

95 CHARDONNAY 2009 TOP 100 WINES 2011 • #28 Editors' Choice - SOLD OUT

A brilliant Chardonnay. Almost nothing quite like it out there.

95 PINOT NOIR 2007 • Editors' Choice - SOLD OUT

92 CHARDONNAY 2010 : Bright aromas of white flowers, lemon blossom, and honeydew mingle with hints of apple tart and brioche. Tiers of white peach and autumnal pear evolve on the broad palate leading to a crisp, expansive finish.

94 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2007 - Library : A very beautiful wine that shows the exotic, feral quality of the greatest Pinot Noirs from the Fort Ross area. It's explosive in wild raspberry and cherry flavors, with hints of pine, cola, wintergreen, anise, bacon and smoky, sweet vanillins from oak barrels. A wine of great pedigree, it's showing well now, and should hold for the next six years. OCT, 2011

93 PINOT NOIR "SYMPOSIUM" 2007 • Editors' Choice - SOLD OUT

92 PINOT NOIR 2008 - SOLD OUT

91 CHARDONNAY RESERVE 2005 - Library

90 PINOT NOIR "SEA SLOPES" 2009 - SOLD OUT : Fruit is the star of this wine. It's gigantic and forward in sweet raspberry and cherry flavors that taste wild, picked under a hot summer sun. Fortunately, there's a lot of acidity, and firm tannins provide additional structure. The finish is thoroughly dry. A bit in your face now, but could do interesting things over the years. OCT, 2011

CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE
TO CALIFORNIA WINE

91 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2007: Although the richest of the several Fort Ross Pinots reviewed in this month's issue, the 2007 Reserve is also the most mannerly and refined of the bunch as well. Its inviting cherry and pastry-crust smells are followed up with like-minded flavors that show a certain measured refinement, and its extra time in the bottle is in part responsible for its polish. It makes for thoroughly satisfying drinking right now, but it still has room left for a bit of additional growth. FEB, 2012

90 PINOT NOIR 2009 : Despite being located within splashing distance of the Pacific, the vineyards at Fort Ross sit high enough up in the coastal hills that they are able to give off wines that are both ripe and balanced. Here, the black cherry nature of the fruit is filled out by invitingly spicy nuances and hints of dried flowers.

90 PINOT NOIR "SYMPOSIUM" : Nicely focused varietal fruit is the mainstay of this composed and carefully crafted offering... We are especially pleased with its continuity and its exceptional finishing length.

90 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2005 - Library

90 CHARDONNAY RESERVE 2005 - Library

Dan Berger's
Vintage Experiences

PINOT NOIR "SYMPOSIUM" 2009 : EXCEPTIONAL: Classy aroma of cherry, tea, very faint note of pepper, and a weight that's a bit Burgundian. A wine that needs aeration; will be lot more complex in 2-3 years.

PINOTAGE 2007 : EXCEPTIONAL: This thick skinned South African grape often makes an odd wine, but here special clonal material personally cleared through official channels makes a dark, blackberry/plum scented wine with weight in the mid-palate and graceful structure. Faintly rustic finish; a great wine to serve blind to a wine snob.

CHARDONNAY 2010 ★★★★★ 1/2 EXCEPTIONAL: Elegantly flavored... Crisp Chardonnay, with full body, moderate richness, and a long, crisp finish, tasting of apple, lemon peel, grapefruit, toast, and roasted nut.

PINOT NOIR "SYMPOSIUM" 2009 ★★★★★EXCEPTIONAL:Excellent - a supple, ripely flavored, full bodied style. It is lightly oaked, well balanced, & long on the finish, tasting of plum, cassis, toast, nutmeg, and spicy oak.

PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2009 ★★★★★EXCEPTIONAL: Subtle and elegant... The Reserve is outstanding: a rich, full bodied wine with supple texture, light tannin, and a long finish, tasting of plum, raspberry, toast, rosehips, and spicy oak. Very fine quality.

PINOT NOIR 2009 ★★★★★EXCELLENT : Subtle, elegant... fleshy and ripely flavored; a well balanced wine with red currant, plum, kola nut, toast, and spicy oak aromas/flavors. Medium long, lightly tannic finish.

PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2005 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast: ★★★★★+ EXCELLENT

94 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2009: This is a gorgeous wine with complex aromas and flavors of strawberry and spices with hints of briny beef. Voluptuous mouthfeel. Very balanced tannins. All here.

93 PINOT NOIR 2009: Super nose of leather, chili, shitake mushroom, and berries. Full-bodied, with wonderfully focused tannins and a spices. So refined and pretty. Gorgeous. Drink or hold.

91 PINOT NOIR "SYMPOSIUM" 2009 : Interesting aromas of cherries and beef jerky follow through to a full bodied palate with strawberry and aspic. Big tannins for a PN.

91 PINOT NOIR 2010: A red with rich aromas of strawberries and cranberries showing some fresh mushrooms. Palate has some preserves and a long, big finish. This is a full-bodied wine showing nicely balanced acidity.

WINEMAKING IN A HOSTILE CLIMATE ON SONOMA'S COAST: Small, idealistic operations...The Sonoma coast pinot noirs have...shown themselves to be among California's best and most distinctive wines, dense and concentrated without being heavy, full of dark fruit and earth flavors and a singular structure of tightly wound acidity. The best Chardonnays are simultaneously rich yet taut, with lively acidity and citrus and mineral flavors.

RONN WIEGAND
RESTAURANT
WINE
The Full Service Guide to On-Site Beverage Profits

JAMES SUCKLING.COM

The
New York
Times

92 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2005 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Spicy cola, raspberry, cranberry and savory herb and dried cherry fruit give this an intriguing range of complex flavors. Balanced, elegant and structured. Drink now through 2012. 513 cases made. —J.L. SEPT 15, 2008

92 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2004 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Deep and complex, with wonderful earth, clay, spice and earthy berry flavors that turn more expansive, with dense, chewy currant, mineral and anise. Ends with ample tannins and a long finish. Drink now through 2012. —J.L. MAY 31, 2007

91 PINOT NOIR 2007 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

A rich, layered style, with firm, intense black cherry, plum and wild berry flavors that are full-bodied, intense and complex, ending with a long, persistent finish. Drink now through 2017. —J.L. JUNE 14, 2010

90 CHARDONNAY 2009 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Fragrant peach, honeysuckle, hazelnut and spice notes join a touch of anise. Smooth, rich and creamy, this glides along gracefully. Drink now through 2017. 863 cases made. —JL JAN, 2012

90 PINOT NOIR RESERVE 2007 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Offers deep, complex, focused plum, mineral and black cherry fruit that's supple and delicate. Full-bodied, ending with a subtle mix of flavors laced with saffras. Drink now through 2016. 344 cases made. —J.L. OCT 2011

90 PINOT NOIR 2005 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Fragrant plum, wild berry and raspberry, with spice, mineral, sage and cedary oak give this depth and firmness and a savory pleasant earthiness. Best from 2009 through 2012. 745 cases made. —J.L. SEPT 2008

91 PINOT NOIR 2004 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

91 PINOT NOIR 2003 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

92 PINOT NOIR SYMPOSIUM 2003 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

90 PINOTAGE 2004 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

91 PINOTAGE 2003 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

90 CHARDONNAY 2004 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

93 CHARDONNAY 2003 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

90 CHARDONNAY RESERVE 2002 Fort Ross Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

18 EXCITING CALIFORNIA REDS: James Laube

New reviews of Napa Cabernet, Sonoma Pinot and more, each for \$50 or less.

The best values include a \$37 Fort Ross Pinot Noir 2007 (91 POINTS:), from the true Sonoma Coast, a 2007 Domaine Chandon Carneros Pinot and a \$30 Landmark McDowell Valley Grenache.

Online June 14, 2010 <http://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/42934>

TASTING HIGHLIGHTS: CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR: James Laube

15 new California Pinot Noirs from some of the state's TOP PRODUCERS, and a rare outstanding California Pinotage. Fort Ross made two EXCELLENT true Sonoma Coast 2005 Pinots.

I also liked Fort Ross's rare (for California) Pinotage, a grape from South Africa that is a cross between Pinot Noir and Cinsault; it has a little more tannic backbone than Pinot Noir, perhaps because these grapes are among the closest vines to the Pacific Ocean.

Online September 15, 2008 : <http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Features/Premium/0,1197,4594,00.html>

A DISCOVERY ON THE SONOMA COAST: James Laube

Fort Ross Vineyard has found a groove. Wine lovers should pay serious attention.

I tried the new wines last week, informally during a visit with Linda and in blind tastings for formal reviews. The new wines are excellent, and the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are both modestly priced. The 2003 CHARDONNAY is intense, vibrant, clean and structured, with lively acidity and a mix of lemon, butterscotch and green apple flavors turning rich and creamy. The 2004 CHARDONNAY follows suit, with intense, vibrant, focused fruit. The 2004 RESERVE CHARDONNAY is a shade richer, very good, but I liked it less than the regular 2004. Both the 2003 PINOT NOIR and 2003 PINOT NOIR SYMPOSIUM are rich, complex and impeccably balanced. The latter wine includes four percent Pinotage. The 2004 PINOT NOIR Sonoma Coast is fragrant and delicate, while the 2004 RESERVE PINOT offers complex earth, spice and berry flavors that are expansive and chewy. The 2003 PINOTAGE is deep and flavorful and shows a touch more tannin than the Pinot Noir Symposium.

Fort Ross' lineup is impressive. The quality is terrific, the prices are more than fair and the case volume means the wines will be available, though I wouldn't wait too long. Online February 20, 2007 : http://www.winespectator.com/Wine/Blogs/Blog_Detail/0,4211,937,00.html