

# FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

## 2005 PINOT NOIR 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

The challenging 2005 Vintage on the Sonoma Coast produced a very small yield but made wines of outstanding intensity. During an unusually warm February the buds swelled and produced leaves only to be subjected to harsh cold and rain. As we had not yet gone through bloom during this wintry weather, the early indications were for a bountiful crop – within the norms of our very low vigor area. In June, just as the vines were in bloom and the berry set looked promising, there was un-seasonal rain that stopped many of the berries from developing, dramatically decreasing the crop. Like all the vineyards in the immediate area, our ultimate yield was about half a ton an acre but the wine produced was of exceptional quality, concentrated in flavor and color, thanks to the small clusters and diminutive berries that made it through the extended harvest, beginning in Mid-September and ending in October. This vintage can be summed up as:

“Quixotic weather + small crop = small clusters + tiny berries = fabulous wine!”

### 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 5 and 10 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 40% new and 60% used French oak. Throughout the 11 months of barrel aging, the selections and different vineyard blocks were kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components as blending elements. For our Reserve wine we selected the most distinctive barrels of Pinot Noir, focusing on our shyly yielding old field selections, and began the lengthy blending process by assessing if each additional barrel would elevate the ultimate Reserve Pinot Noir. The wine was bottled without fining or filtration and the final blend reflects the intense concentration and complexity found in these distinctive barrels and displays a seamless balance.

### TASTING NOTES

Our 2005 Reserve Pinot is a deep, opulent ruby hue that is nearly opaque. This generous wine is truly the most substantial, intensely concentrated Fort Ross Vineyard Pinot Noir to date. Vivid, complex aromas of dense dark bramble berry and violets are perfumed by hints of black tea and a touch of exotic spices. The firmly structured tannins elegantly support the tiers of ripe black plums, black cherry and cola and will allow this wine to age gracefully. The velvety, complex finish lingers on the palate.

COMPOSITION:	100% Pinot Noir
APPELLATION:	Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN:	Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS:	Calera, Pommard, Swan and Dijon 115 clones
AGING:	11 months in 100% French; 40% new
ALCOHOL	14%
ACIDITY:	.56g/100ml
pH:	3.66
BOTTLING:	Unfined and unfiltered
HARVESTED:	September 29–October 3, 2005
BOTTLED:	September 6, 2006
CASES PRODUCED:	513 cases 750 ml
RELEASE DATE:	January 2008