

# SEA SLOPES™

## FORT ROSS WINERY



### 2021 CHARDONNAY · SONOMA COAST

Sea Slopes Chardonnay is inspired by the majestic Sonoma Coast and the steep rugged ridges perched at the golden edge of the continent. Here, the cool maritime climate produces fruit of exceptional quality and allows us to craft wines of great elegance and purity. “We aim to capture the essence of the Coast. These wines are at once approachable, balanced and eminently worthy of the quality standards we have established with Fort Ross” - Owner, Lester Schwartz



**2021 VINTAGE:** The growing season on the coast experienced lower than average rainfall levels which signaled the start of another drier than average vintage. These parched soils came with a silver lining, though, as the roots of the vines were forced to dig deep into the earth in search of water and nutrients to sustain growth—which also brought beautiful concentration of flavor. The summer enjoyed steady, mild 80-85° temperatures, allowing the grapes to develop ideal complexity and flavors. A warm August allowed harvest to begin on the earlier side, creating coastal wines with freshness, acidity and a purity of fruit.

**WINEMAKING:** The grapes were hand-sorted to include the finest fruit, which was then gently pressed. Fermentation occurred in the ideal combination of stainless steel and neutral barrels for vibrancy and freshness as well as a small amount of new French oak barrels which adds texture and length to the finish. The wine completed malolactic fermentation, adding a supple richness. Prior to bottling it was aged on the lees with occasional gentle stirring culminating in a pure expression of Chardonnay from the extreme Sonoma Coast.

**TASTING NOTES:** Energetic aromas of bright lemon, floral honeysuckle and honeydew melon emerge from the glass. The palate is fresh and lively with vibrant acidity. Juicy citrus and apricot tones are beautifully balanced by hints of spice and wet stone minerality. The fine texture reflects a deft hand in winemaking and the long beaming finish completes this cool climate Chardonnay.

**JEFF PISONI, WINEMAKER** “From the cold, foggy weather to the steep, rugged terrain and marine influences, Sea Slopes explores the hillsides of the Sonoma Coast to craft the best Chardonnay and Pinot Noir possible. Sea Slopes Chardonnay has a bright, vibrant, fresh and texturally layered complex expression of coastal Chardonnay.”

**COMPOSITION:** 100% Chardonnay

**AGING:** 8 months in 100% Neutral French oak

**BOTTLING:** May 2022

**90 POINTS - THE TERROIRIST, Isaac James Baker** The aromas, are a balanced between richer tones (honey, nougat, apricot, ginger, almond) and brighter ones (white flowers, sea salt, crushed limestone). The palate shows rich texture and racy acidity, making for a juicy but lip-smacking Chard with flavors of apricot and yellow apple. Notes of chalk, flint, almond shell, ginger snaps, and honey add complexity.

**4 STARS - THE PRESS DEMOCRAT, Peg Melnik** Rich flavors are kept in check by crisp acidity. Notes of honeysuckle and lemon, with a lingering finish. Pretty.