

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

~ WINEMAKING: PINOT NOIR, CHARDONNAY, PINOTAGE & ROSÉ ~

PINOT NOIR

After hand-sorting, the Pinot Noir grapes are destemmed, cold soaked for 4-6 days and fermented in open top fermenters. A certain amount of carefully selected whole clusters are included. Winemaker, Jeff Pisoni says, “Early in the fermentation I punch down more to extract gentle tannins. Later in the fermentation I avoid extracting the harder seed tannins.” The Pinot Noir goes through both primary and malolactic fermentation. “I like to use native yeast for fermentation. Native yeast is from both the vineyard and the winery. The fermentation is slower but the results are more distinctive”. Shortly after gentle pressing, the wine is transferred to carefully selected French Oak Barrels: 30% new barrels; 30% one year old barrels and 40% neutral barrels. Throughout the winemaking process, the individual field selections, clones and blocks are kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components. Prior to bottling, blending trials determine which lots will go into each final blend. The objective is to create wines that reveal their fruit with structure, balance and finesse. Fort Ross Vineyard Pinot Noirs are Estate grown and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Fort Ross Vineyard generally produces four different Pinot Noirs each vintage:

Reserve Pinot Noir: 300 cases produced from 12 exceptional barrels carefully selected from our favorite blocks.

Pinot Noir “Fort Ross Vineyard”: Our Premier Estate Pinot Noir – 100% Pinot Noir from our best blocks.

Pinot Noir “Symposium”: Proprietary blend of 97% Pinot Noir with 3% Pinotage.

Pinot Noir “Sea Slopes”: 100% Pinot Noir – a lighter, more delicate, feminine blend.

CHARDONNAY

Chardonnay grapes are carefully handpicked in the cool night and then hand sorted at the winery. The grapes are whole cluster pressed and carefully monitored to limit press juice to only the first and the finest. Although this renders less gallonage, it avoids undesirable flavors derived from harder pressed wine. After pressing, the wine is transferred to carefully selected French Oak Barrels : 30% new barrels; 30% one year old barrels and 40% neutral barrels, where it undergoes primary and malolactic fermentation. Throughout the winemaking process the individual field selections, clones and blocks are kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components. Prior to bottling, blending trials determine which clones, blocks and barrels will go into each blend. Fort Ross Vineyard Chardonnays are Estate grown and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. The vineyard yields can vary greatly for Chardonnay producing from 400-800 cases each vintage.

Fort Ross Vineyard produces one or two different Chardonnays each vintage:

Reserve Chardonnay: Certain vintages 200 cases are produced from eight carefully selected barrels from our favorite blocks.

Chardonnay “Fort Ross Vineyard” : Produced every vintage.

PINOTAGE

The Pinotage is vinified similarly to the Pinot Noir, however we punch down far less to keep the tannins from overwhelming the fruit flavors. After hand-sorting, the grapes are cold soaked for several days and fermented in open-top fermenters, with manual punch downs. Shortly after pressing, the wines are aged in neutral French oak to allow the wine to maintain its full fruit flavor. The Pinotage typically spends between 10 - 14 months in wood and is racked just prior to bottling. It is Estate grown from two proprietary Pinotage clones from South Africa and is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

ROSÉ of PINOT NOIR

Some years Fort Ross makes a small amount Rosé, using the French saignée method, where a small amount of free run juice is separated from the recently crushed grapes. The juice is then fermented without the tannic influence of the skins and seeds, producing a tantalizing and delightfully crisp dry summer wine. The Rosé is fermented in neutral oak barrels and allowed to complete malolactic fermentation.