

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

2014 CHARDONNAY · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

OVERVIEW

From our mountain vineyard that overlooks the Sonoma Coast and now part of the new Fort Ross-Seaview American Viticultural Area, Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery produces limited quantities of single vineyard, 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 32 separate blocks, one-half to two acres in size, that range in elevation from 1700 down to 1200 feet above sea level. Owners, Lester and Linda Schwartz with their small crew began preparing the 55 acre vineyard in 1994. It took them 4 years of preparation before they could begin planting. The year 2000 marked the first vintage from the Fort Ross Vineyard.

VINTAGE

2014 was the third year of bountiful harvests that again produced stellar wine of vibrancy and concentration. Protected from the drought by the late winter rains that quickly filled our pond, we could enjoy one of the few luxuries of being off the grid. As we train our grapes to grow on cordons, with evenly positioned buds that would produce evenly placed shoots, we had the privilege of dropping clusters that were not perfectly positioned. We went through the vineyard three times to ensure that the bunches would enjoy free air circulation and optimal sun exposure. The depth of flavor of the wine from this vintage reflects this meticulous handwork. August 17 marked the beginning of the harvest with picking a select block of Pinot Noir Dijon 777 for our new Sparkling Wine Program. The remaining Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinotage ripened quickly and evenly and was harvested by the middle of September.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in small two-gallon picking trays then hand sorted in the vineyard and gently whole cluster pressed at the winery. After pressing, the juice was put into barrels and underwent primary and malolactic fermentation in a combination of 30% new and 70% neutral French oak. This discrete use of new oak allowed the fruit to shine. This wine is comprised of small berried old Hyde field selection chosen for its richness and sleek structure and small berried old Wente for its luscious fruit and grace. These heritage field selections have full, complex flavors that are intensified by the small size of both the bunches and the berries.

TASTING NOTES

The hue is a hazy pale lemon, evidence of subtle stirring of the lees (batonnage) and bottling without fining or filtration. The generous almost viscous texture weaves seamlessly together with the vibrant acidity and minerality characteristic of the Fort Ross Vineyard's coastal terroir. Vivid aromas of citrus blossom, melon, and lemon tart with hints of marzipan soar. Layers of fleshy apricot and autumnal pear with hints of citrus and spice evolve on the palate lead to the expansive finish.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Old Hyde & Wente field selections
AGING: 10 months in French oak; 30% new
ALCOHOL: 13.5%
BOTTLING: August, 2015 - Unfined & Unfiltered
RELEASE DATE: February 2016
CASES PRODUCED: 785 cases, 750ml
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni