

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2016 MOTHER OF PEARL · CHARDONNAY · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW



From our mountain vineyard that overlooks the Sonoma Coast in the 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 52 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: 2016 was another year of drought throughout California. Fortunately, Fort Ross Vineyard was not affected as the early December rainfall was sufficient to fill our irrigation ponds to capacity and even allowed us to have water at the end harvest. The ideal moderate weather on the coast leading up to harvest was free of heatwaves and rain, allowing the grapes to mature slowly and evenly to reach their optimal development. The Pinot Noir was unhurriedly harvested between September 3 — 20, one of the many advantages of growing grapes overlooking the cool Pacific Ocean. Chardonnay was picked September 17 — 26 and finally the slower ripening Pinotage on September 23 — 28. Our new block of Chardonnay, just off Meyers Grade Road had its first harvest in 2016 and the fruit is showing great promise. The lasting memory of the harvest is a vision of perfect bunches of grapes, with no side wings to delay the ripening, even berry size and a balanced crop hanging on the vines. These wines are vibrant and aromatic with excellent acidity.

WINEMAKING: Mother of Pearl, with its captivating, lustrous iridescent facets, inspired the naming of this Chardonnay made from grapes grown on the highest Fort Ross Vineyard Chardonnay blocks. These 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 25% new and 75% neutral French oak. This wine is comprised of small berried old Hyde field selection chosen for its richness with a 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 slight haze in the golden hue is evidence of subtle stirring of the lees and bottling without fining or filtration. The generous aromas of honeysuckle, marmalade and chamomile meld harmoniously with notes of warm brioche. Complex layers of ripe apricot, lemon meringue and hints of hazelnut embrace the palate with an alluring richness that is balanced by unifying acidity. The finish reveals incredible depth and length as it lingers with finesse.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Wente & Hyde Field Selections
AGING: 10 months in 100% French oak; 25% new
ALCOHOL: 13.5%
HARVESTED: September 17—26, 2016
BOTTLING: August, 2017, Unfined & Unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 115 cases
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni

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