

# FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

*Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines*

2019 STAGECOACH ROAD · PINOT NOIR · 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:** 2019 was a very curious year. Early in the season the vineyard received a light sprinkling of snow, followed by some frost - which is most surprising at the altitude of the vineyard [1,200 ft – 1,700 ft]; and our location, less than a mile from the Pacific Ocean. For the last 20 years of viticulture, we have had no need for frost protection. We waited to see what kind of crop would develop and are pleased to announce that buds popped out and we even needed to drop a significant amount of fruit. Later in the season we had a brief heat wave reaching over 100 degrees! As we pick at night, we still have cool grapes to start winemaking. Then just as harvest was ending, we experienced howling 60 mile an hour winds that even blew open locked doors. The 2019 modest crop has produced wines with a luscious mouthfeel, an elegant, restrained acid profile and a satisfying balance. Pinot Noir was unhurriedly harvested between September 16 – October 7, Chardonnay was picked September 19 – October 7, and finally the slower ripening Pinotage on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

**WINEMAKING:** The grapes for this Pinot Noir were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in 2 gallon trays. After hand sorting, the fruit was cold soaked for several days and fermented in a combination of 5 and 10 ton tanks. The caps were punched down 1 or 2 times per day, depending on the stage of the fermentation. The wines were then barreled in a combination of 50% new and 50% neutral French oak. Throughout the 10 months of barrel aging, the clones and different vineyard blocks were kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components as blending elements. These grapes are sourced from specific blocks where the old stagecoach road used to run through our vineyard and where Black Bart the famous “Gentleman Bandit” Highwayman robbed the Wells Fargo Stagecoach in 1877.

**TASTING NOTES:** Stagecoach Road is a cuvée crafted from grapes grown in blocks on our estate that lay closest to the Pacific Ocean with the darkest soils. Often producing the most robust and full-bodied style of Pinot Noir from our Estate, the 2019 vintage proved no different. Hinting at its intensity and depth through a near purple hue, the aromatic profile of this wine bursts from the glass with powerful notes of juicy plum, black cherry, wet earth, and sandalwood spice. Remarkably dense on the palate, flavors of blackberry and cassis pave the way to bold, savory notes of black tea, cocoa, and clove. Pronounced acidity and firm yet fine-grained tannins dominate the endless finish, suggesting that this bold Pinot Noir will continue to age gracefully in your cellar for years to come.

**COMPOSITION:** 100% Pinot Noir  
**APPELLATION:** Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast  
**ESTATE GROWN:** Fort Ross Vineyard  
**SELECTIONS:** Calera  
**AGING:** 11 months in 100% French oak;  
50% new oak barrels

**HARVESTED:** Sept. 16 – Oct 7, 2019  
**BOTTLING:** August 31, 2020  
Unfined & Unfiltered  
**CASES PRODUCED:** 220 cases, 750ml  
**WINEMAKER:** Jeff Pisoni

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