

# FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

*Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines*

2016 THE TERRACES · 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:** 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:** The Terraces is crafted from 100% Calera clone planted on our single unique Terraced Block #11. Comprised of rocky Hugo Boomer sandy loam soils, this block was painstakingly carved out of the rugged hillside that faces the cool Pacific. With its steep South West aspect this may be one of the most extreme plantings on the Sonoma Coast. 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. Fermentation occurred with native yeast in 5 and 10-ton stainless steel 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 40% new and 60% neutral French oak.

**TASTING NOTES:** This is a pure expression of a single clone, from a unique terraced block that captures the essence and character of the Calera Clone. The nearly opaque garnet hue immediately reveals the depth of the 2016 vintage. Complex aromas of black plum, boysenberry and cassis are accented by hints of lavender and sandalwood. On the palate, focused black cherry and blackberry fruit layers are grounded by earthy notes. This generous wine has an alluring velvety mouth-feel with supple, harmoniously integrated tannins. The Terraces is showing beautifully now and will certainly continue to develop gracefully through its' 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and beyond.

**COMPOSITION:** 100% Pinot Noir  
**APPELLATION:** Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast  
**ESTATE GROWN:** Fort Ross Vineyard  
**SELECTIONS:** Calera  
**AGING:** 10 months in 100% French oak; 40% new  
**HARVESTED:** September 3 — 20, 2016  
**BOTTLING:** August 2017, Unfined & Unfiltered  
**CASES PRODUCED:** 142 cases  
**WINEMAKER:** Jeff Pisoni