

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2016 TOP OF LAND 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 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 40% new and 60% neutral French oak. Throughout the 11 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.

TASTING NOTES: This nearly opaque garnet hued wine shows great complexity, integrating both the pure fruit and earthy qualities found in fine Pinot Noirs. The grapes for this cuvée are sourced from several of the lowest yielding blocks located at the highest elevations of the Fort Ross Vineyard. Layered aromatics of black cherry, boysenberry and violets are accented by orange peel, cola and bark. The palate opens up with dark berries and juicy black plums followed by a touch of tangy rhubarb and spice that is balanced by the firm, dusty tannins. The Fort Ross Vineyard signature minerality is revealed through the long mouthwatering finish.

COMPOSITION: 100% Pinot Noir
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Swan, Pommard & Calera
AGING: 11 months in 100% French oak; 40% new
ALCOHOL: 13.5%
HARVESTED: September 3 — 20, 2016
BOTTLED: August, 2017 - Unfined & Unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 142 cases
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni