

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2017 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: The 2017 growing season welcomed generous rainfall for the first several months of the year. After five drought years the soils were hydrated and our irrigation pond was brimming. Bud-break occurred in mid-March followed by a warmer than usual spring which brought an early fruit-set, fortunately, by then the rains had subsided. The summer enjoyed mild to average, 80–85° temperatures, allowing the grapes to develop ideal complexity and flavors with optimal development. During the first week of September, all of California experienced a heat spike, with this the first few blocks were harvested. Temperatures then mellowed during the remainder of harvest, allowing each variety to be picked at the ideal time. Pinot Noir was unhurriedly harvested between August 31–September 19, one of the many advantages of growing grapes overlooking the cool Pacific Ocean. Chardonnay was picked September 10–14 and finally the slower ripening Pinotage on October 3rd. Fortunately, all of our fruit was picked prior to the heartbreaking 2017 Sonoma fires. The vintage brought in lower yields, producing wines with great depth and concentration, while the hydrated soils delivered vibrant aromatics and acidity.

WINEMAKING: The grapes for this Pinot Noir come from the blocks that are planted at the highest elevations in the vineyard. They are 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 45% new and 55% 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 tea, Bing cherry, and bramble berries are accented by the slightest hint of lavender. The palate opens up with red berries and black plums followed by warm spice and firm, dusty tannins. The Fort Ross Vineyard signature minerality is revealed through the seamless, silky finish.

COMPOSITION:	100% Pinot Noir	HARVESTED:	September 10 –14, 2017
APPELLATION:	Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast	BOTTLING:	August, 2018, Unfined & Unfiltered
ESTATE GROWN:	Fort Ross Vineyard	CASES PRODUCED:	246 cases, 750ml
SELECTIONS:	Pommard, Calera, 115	WINEMAKER:	Jeff Pisoni
AGING:	10 months in 100% French oak; 45% new oak barrels		