

FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

2001 PINOTAGE · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · SONOMA COAST

OVERVIEW

From our mountain vineyard on the “True Sonoma Coast”, Fort Ross Vineyard produces limited amounts of estate grown, cool-climate Pinotage, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay. With spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean less than one mile away, the vineyard is divided into 28 separate blocks, one half to two acres in size, traversing elevations ranging from 1200 to 1700 feet above sea level. Owners, Lester and Linda Schwartz with their small crew began preparing the 44 acre vineyard in 1994 and planting began in 1998.

VINTAGE

2001 was our first commercial vintage. A relatively cool spring preceded warm weather in May and June. In August and September, the cooling influence of the nearby Pacific Ocean allowed the grapes to reach physiological maturity without the risk of dehydration. Individual blocks were harvested on multiple occasions based upon flavor profile and ripeness of the individual vines.

WINEMAKING

Pinotage was first developed in South Africa in 1925 by crossing the two vinifera varieties, Pinot Noir and Cinsault. Our Pinotage consists of two Fort Ross proprietary clones, MM1 and MM3, developed from bud wood personally imported by Fort Ross from one of the most select Pinotage vineyards in South Africa. We vinify the variety much the same as our Pinot Noir. After hand sorting, the grapes were destemmed, cold soaked for several days and fermented in simple open-top fermenters and gently punched down. Shortly after pressing, the wines were barreled in a combination of new and used French oak. The wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

While Pinotage shares many traits with Pinot Noir, there is an exotic brambleness that distinguishes it from its more famous cousin. Our 2001 Pinotage is rich and well structured with subtle tannins that frame this full bodied wine. The ripe plum and blackberry flavors are enhanced by spicy overtones. It is the perfect accompaniment to hearty meals, spicy foods and grilled meats.

COMPOSITION: 100% Pinotage
SELECTIONS: Clones MM1 and MM3
AGING: 22 months in 100% French; 50% new
ALCOHOL 14.5%
ACIDITY: .62 g/100ml
pH: 3.80
BOTTLING: Unfinned and unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 140 cases 750 ml, 17 cases 12/375 ml
RELEASE DATE: Current release.