

FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

2002 CHARDONNAY · 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 Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinotage. 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 and their small crew began preparing the 44 acre vineyard in 1994 and planting began in 1998.

VINTAGE

Many have hailed 2002 as the finest vintage ever for California Pinot Noir. It also turned out to be an excellent year for Sonoma Coast Chardonnay. Overall, the growing season was mild, with a few temperature spikes in May and June. July, August and early September were typical for the region – moderately warm days with a gentle dip in the temperature at night.

WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Chardonnay were handpicked in the cool early morning hours in small five-gallon buckets. Once at the winery, the fruit was hand sorted and then whole cluster pressed. After pressing, the wine underwent barrel and malolactic fermentation in a combination of new and used French oak. Once the final blend was determined, the wine was racked and bottled without fining or filtration to maintain the natural flavor, texture and youthfulness of the wine.

TASTING NOTES

This is not a typical California Chardonnay, but is more in the style of a Burgundian Grand Cru. Layers of luscious white peach, ripe apples, and honeyed aromatics, interlaced with the vineyard’s signature minerality evolve into a smooth, elegant finish. The generous flavors of this graceful Chardonnay are balanced by just enough acid to create a lively, well-structured wine that can be enjoyed now or cellared for several years.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
SELECTIONS: Old Hyde and Wente field selections
AGING: 12 months in 100% French; 50% new
ALCOHOL 14.3%
ACIDITY: .54 g/100ml
pH: 3.56
BOTTLING: Unfined and unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 382 cases 750 ml, 75 cases 12/375 ml
RELEASE DATE: July 2005