

FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2015 CHARDONNAY · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST



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: Compared to the bountiful harvests of 2012, 2013, 2014 and again in 2016, the 2015 Vintage produced quite modest yields. Early budbreak was followed by relatively warm temperatures until May, when the temperature suddenly dropped to record breaking levels, which slowed bloom to set, producing variation in berry maturity and yield. The Pinot Noir was unhurriedly harvested between August 17 — September 8, one of the many advantages of growing grapes overlooking the cool Pacific Ocean. Chardonnay was picked September 10 — September 12 and finally the slower ripening Pinotage on September 24th. The lower yields delivered exceptional wines that are layered, focused and showing gracious purity. Ideal acidity levels are prevalent in all the wines, with well-developed tannins and structure for drinking now or for aging.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in small two-gallon picking trays then hand sorted in the vineyard and gently whole cluster pressed at the winery. After pressing, the juice was put into barrels and underwent primary and malolactic fermentation in a combination of 30% new and 70% neutral French oak. This discrete use of new oak allowed the fruit to shine. This wine is comprised of small berried old Hyde field selection chosen for its richness and sleek structure and small berried old Wente for its luscious fruit and grace. These heritage field selections have full, complex flavors that are intensified by the small size of both the bunches and the berries.

TASTING NOTES: The hazy golden hue is evidence of subtle stirring of the lees and bottling without fining or filtration. The decadent texture and layers of intense fruit finely intertwine with the vibrant acidity and minerality characteristic of the Fort Ross Vineyard's coastal terroir. Seductive aromas of honeysuckle, apricot and zesty citrus mingle with just a hint of brioche to captivate the senses. The complex palate of classic yellow peaches and autumnal pear with accents of lemon oil and hazelnuts unfold on the palate and carry through the expansive finish.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION: Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTIONS: Old Hyde & Wente field selections
AGING: 10 months in French oak; 30% new
ALCOHOL: 13.5%
HARVESTED: September 10—12, 2015
BOTTLING: August, 2016, Unfined & Unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED: 293 cases, 750ml
WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni