

# FORT ROSS

VINEYARD & WINERY · SONOMA COAST

## 2007 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 30 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 50 acre vineyard in 1994 and planting began in 1998. The last two blocks were planted in 2008 – during a pause during the harvest.

### VINTAGE

2007 was a long, cool growing season, providing the ideal conditions for berry development. Our proximity to the ocean and its cooling effects saved us from a heat spike that affected inland areas much more severely. All Chardonnay blocks were picked through mid-October, based on optimal physiological ripeness. The vines were balanced, the yields were small, and the concentration of flavor was excellent this year. The rains began the day after we had finished picking the Chardonnay.

### WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Chardonnay were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in small five-gallon buckets. The fruit was hand sorted in the vineyard and gently whole cluster pressed at the winery. After pressing, the wine underwent primary and malolactic fermentation in a combination of 25% new and 75% used French oak. This discrete use of new oak allowed the fruit to shine. During extended blending trials that produced countless blends from different permutations of the field selections (clones), blocks and barrels we determined that our 2007 Chardonnay was seamlessly balanced when all of the barrels were blended together, including those we had set aside for the Reserve bottling. The result is that there will be no separate Reserve Chardonnay in 2007. This wine is comprised of 75% small berried old Hyde field selection chosen for its richness and sleek structure and 25% old Wente for its luscious fruit and grace.

### TASTING NOTES

This golden hued Chardonnay perfectly balances lush complexity with the natural acidity characteristic of the Fort Ross coastal climate. Aromas of ripe melons, apricots and lemon meringue are framed by a hint of hazelnut. The focused palate of full, succulent Chardonnay fruit flavors are enlivened by the vineyard's signature minerality. The graceful finish lingers with finesse and elegance. This finely-structured Chardonnay from an ideal vintage will continue to evolve for many years.

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay  
APPELLATION: Sonoma Coast  
ESTATE GROWN: Fort Ross Vineyard  
SELECTIONS: 75% Old Hyde - 25% Wente field selections  
AGING: 8 months French; 25% new oak  
ALCOHOL 14.5%  
ACIDITY: .62 g/100ml  
pH: 3.64  
HARVESTED: October 14, 2007  
BOTTLED: June 26, 2008  
RELEASE DATE: October, 2009- Pre-Release  
CASES PRODUCED: 1055 cases 750ml