

# FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

2011 BICENTENNIAL · PINOT NOIR · FORT ROSS VINEYARD

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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 31 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 55 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. Fort Ross Vineyard was selected to produce a special Pinot Noir and Chardonnay to commemorate the 1812 – 2012 Bicentennial of the old Russian Settlement of Fort Ross on the Sonoma Coast. This was the site of the first grape plantings in all of Sonoma County and even foreshadowed the plantings in Napa County. The winery was given permission from the Kunstkamera of the St. Peter the Great Museum in St. Petersburg to use the painting of the old fort produced in 1841 by the famous naturalist, Il'ya Vosnesenky.

## VINTAGE

The growing cycle generally starts late in this cool, maritime climate but the 2011 spring was unusually cold and wet. The vineyard remained dormant until May when the days suddenly grew hot and the vines burst into action three months later than usual. In June, during bloom, the clusters were well positioned on the vines. Then it rained once more resulting in far less cluster development than expected. During the cool summer the grapes did increase their pace to make up for lost time and miraculously developed vibrant flavors at far lower degrees Brix. With some hot weather the sugar levels did increase but still remained far lower than in previous vintages. Finally most of the vineyard was picked at about 22° Brix which converts into wine of approximately 13% alcohol. We were fortunate that the wild Sonoma Coast gave us another unexpected gift - time to wait patiently before harvest.

## WINEMAKING

The grapes for this Pinot Noir were 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 40% new and 60% neutral French oak. Throughout the 10 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

With a garnet hue, this terroir-driven Pinot Noir offers delicate, yet complex aromas of brambly fruit and raspberries that weave together with wild forest floor, cola and cinnamon spice. The elegant aromatics lead to a complex palate defined by black raspberry, Bing cherry and bramble berries, with hints of subtle citrus and a dash of winter spices. The fine, supple tannin structure reflects the cooler vintage and perfectly frames the earth that is revealed through the layered, velvety finish.

COMPOSITION:	100% Pinot Noir
APPELLATION:	Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast
ESTATE GROWN:	Fort Ross Vineyard
SELECTION:	Pommard, 115 and 777
AGING:	10 months in 100% French oak; 40% new
ALCOHOL:	13.5%
HARVESTED:	Late-September to Early-October, 2011
BOTTLED:	August, 2013 - Unfined & Unfiltered
CASES PRODUCED:	93 cases 750 ml

WINEMAKER: Jeff Pisoni

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