



WINE SPECTATOR: Retailers Report - Fort Ross Winery Debuts New Brand

California's Fort Ross Winery has launched a new brand sourced from Sonoma Coast. Sea Slopes includes a Pinot Noir—a fruit-forward offering made with native yeasts and aged in 100% French oak—and a partially French oak-aged Chardonnay.

2016 CHARDONNAY, Sonoma Coast

92 POINTS - EDITORS CHOICE: WINE ENTHUSIAST Brioche and almond flavors meet a sleek, smooth and tightly focused core in this meticulously made white. Apple, pear and lemon meringue provide complexity on the midpalate before finishing crisp and slightly spicy. —V.B

USA TODAY NETWORK Hailing from the Sonoma Coast, this **elegant wine is bright and crisp** with lively aromas of citrus and peach and a **rich palate**.

2016 PINOT NOIR, Sonoma Coast

92 POINTS - EDITORS CHOICE: WINE ENTHUSIAST An impressive selection from Winemaker Jeff Pisoni. A hint of forest-floor spice and strong flavors of dark cherry and orange combine on a light, silky texture. This offers a great sense of finesse within a framework of structure and freshness. —V.B.

90 POINTS: THE WINE ADVOCATE Pale ruby-purple colored, the 2016 Pinot Noir Sea Slopes gives up notions of warm cranberries and **Bing cherries with raspberry leaves**, dried sage and tilled soil undercurrent. The palate is medium-bodied, **refreshing and vivacious** with a nice bit of chew to the texture and a persistent earthy finish.—L.P-B.

90 POINTS: WINE & SPIRITS Tight and formal in its tart cherry flavors, then opens to a **gentle, gracious pinot noir**. Decant it for roast duck.—J.G.

90 POINTS: JEB DUNNUCK Another **terrific value from this estate**. Cherries, strawberries, spice and an undeniable salty, marine-like minerality give way to a fresh, elegant, medium-bodied effort that shows the cooler, **complex style of the Sonoma Coast** appellation. **Bravo**.

WINE OF THE WEEK: DAN BERGER'S VINTAGE EXPERIENCES Dark cherry fruit, then trace amounts of cinnamon or nutmeg, with grace notes of French oak for complexity mark the superb aromas of this **excellent value PN**. This is the lower-level (!) wine of Fort Ross and is an **excellent value** since it has a bit of weight and is nicely balanced.

2015 PINOT NOIR, Sonoma Coast

94 POINTS - EDITORS CHOICE: WINE ENTHUSIAST **Astounding quality for the price**, a juicy expression of fruit and spice with a depth of firm resolved tannin, lively acidity and layers of black cherry and cola. Approachable and delicious, it hits the mark on every level.—V.B.

93 POINTS - 2018 BUYING GUIDE: YEAR'S BEST PINOT NOIRS: WINE & SPIRITS

This is a new project focusing on more affordable wines from Fort Ross Winery, where Jeff Pisoni makes the wines for Lester and Linda Schwartz. An earthy, coastal pinot, this has an elastic tension to the structure that reminded some of our tasters of certain Williams Selyem wines from the far coast. The tannins continue to give it shape and enhance its power; this is a wine to cellar for a few years, or to decant for grille duck breast. —J.G.

92 POINTS: TASTING PANEL MAGAZINE From the edge of the rugged ridges of the Sonoma Coast comes this full-bodied, fruit driven Pinot. Aromas of black cherry make way for a plethora of flavors and scents: Salty rhubarb startles as dried herbs usher in savoriness. Graphite enters at mid-palate, with notes of juicy strawberries. Cara Cara oranges, cranberries and black tea. Satin-like tannins with a creamy finish.—M.M.

