



Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines

2022 CHENIN BLANC · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW



From our mountain vineyard that overlooks the Sonoma Coast in the Fort Ross-Seaview American Viticultural Area, Fort Ross Vineyard produces limited quantities of single vineyard, Estate grown, cool-climate Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinotage and Chenin Blanc. 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.

2022 VINTAGE: Winemaking is adapting to the never-ending trials provided by Mother Nature, and the 2022 vintage was no exception. As if a sign of things to come, a warmer end to the dormant winter season brought about an early budbreak on February 18th. Average spring temperatures promoted steady, early season vine growth, however, ill-timed rain during flowering would prove to affect overall yields come harvest. The warm, sunny days of summer on the Pacific coast provided ample time for optimum fruit development after veraison, while the chilly, ocean fueled winds kept ripeness levels in check and maintained fresh acidity in each precious berry. Harvest began with Pinot Noir on August 19th – September 7th, followed by Chardonnay on September 6th – 9th, finally Chenin Blanc and Pinotage completed the harvest on September 12th. Each hand harvested cluster is picked and transported to the winery in the cool morning hours. The final curve ball of the season occurred the first week of September, during harvest, when a heat wave increased temperatures at the coast for multiple days. Fortunately, our meticulous vineyard team diligently managed the situation. Ultimately, final yields were down considerably, however the fruit quality was excellent, with small, flavorful berries possessing exceptional concentration and complexity.

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 neutral French Oak barrels and underwent primary and malolactic fermentation. The use of neutral oak allows the fruit to shine, while imparting supple texture to the wine. This wine is comprised of a single Chenin Blanc clone, that was grafted onto established rootstock on half an acre in Block 1, next to our Pinotage.

TASTING NOTES: Only our second bottling of the Fort Ross Chenin Blanc, the 2022 vintage is yet another beautiful example of an Old World variety thriving on the rugged Sonoma Coast. Vibrantly hued deep lemon core that softens to shades of straw at its rim, this wine gradually reveals itself in the glass. Aromas of ripe pear, lemon meringue, candied ginger, and crushed stone soar, and a saline edge speaks to the proximity of our vineyard to the Pacific Ocean below. On the palate, this Chenin Blanc is still California in style with a plush mouthfeel and flavors of yellow apple, melon, and subtle stone fruit that integrates seamlessly with vanilla bean and a hint of baking spice from aging in 100% neutral French oak barrels. This wine is crisp, refreshing with racy acidity, while offering complexity, texture and noticeable concentration on the palate.

COMPOSITION:	100% Chenin Blanc	HARVESTED:	September 12 th , 2022
APPELLATION:	Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast	BOTTLED:	July 25, 2023, Unfiltered
ESTATE GROWN:	Fort Ross Vineyard	PRODUCED:	162 cases, 750ml
AGING:	11 months in neutral French oak	WINEMAKER:	Jeff Pisoni