



*Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines*

2021 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 & 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.

**2021 VINTAGE:** Our high elevation vineyard overlooking the Pacific Ocean is unique as it benefits greatly from the cooling influences of this rugged coastline, yet like the rest of Sonoma County, we experienced lower than average rainfall totals which signaled the start of another drier than average vintage. These parched soils came with a silver lining, though, as the roots of our vines were forced to dig deep into the earth in search of water and nutrients to sustain growth—which also brought great concentration of flavor. Budbreak in early March was followed by slow, yet steady canopy development and eventually fruit set. Moderate temperatures persisted throughout the summer with no heatwaves. Harvest arrived on under the protection of an umbrella of near perfect conditions, allowing for methodical hand picking at phenological ripeness. Starting with Chardonnay on September 11<sup>th</sup>, picking of our Pinot Noir blocks began on August 30<sup>th</sup>, our first ever Chenin Blanc was carefully hand-harvested on September 13<sup>th</sup>, and was followed lastly by our signature Pinotage on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The wines produced from this fantastic vintage will be regarded for their intense concentration of color and flavor, as well as an undeniable density that will continue to evolve for years to come.

**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** Richly hued with shades of deep lemon at its core, the 2021 Fort Ross Chenin Blanc exudes characteristics that harken back to its old-world roots, while simultaneously reflecting the rugged new world slopes of the far western Sonoma Coast. The nose bursts with notes of ripe Bartlett pear and baked red apple, with creamy undertones of lemon curd, fresh honeysuckle, and a hint of salinity in the form of fresh sea air create a remarkably complex profile. The captivating aromatics segway into a plush, palate loaded with quince, candied ginger, and toasted vanilla. Racy and vibrant acidity brought on by the cold, harsh, and distinctly maritime climate of our estate vineyard, cut like a knife as this wine finishes textured and full bodied from 16 months of aging in 100% neutral French oak barrels.

COMPOSITION:	100% Chenin Blanc	HARVESTED:	September 13, 2021
APPELLATION:	Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast	BOTTLED:	February 2023, Unfiltered
ESTATE GROWN:	Fort Ross Vineyard	PRODUCED:	240 cases, 750ml
AGING:	16 months in neutral French oak	WINEMAKER:	Jeff Pisoni