

# FORT ROSS

FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST

*Dedicated farming, Masterful Winemaking, Profound Wines*

2016 “FRV” PINOT NOIR · FORT ROSS VINEYARD · FORT ROSS-SEAVIEW · SONOMA COAST



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.

**VINTAGE:** 2016 was another year of drought throughout California. Fortunately, Fort Ross Vineyard was not affected as the early December rainfall was sufficient to fill our irrigation ponds to capacity and even allowed us to have water at the end harvest. The ideal moderate weather on the coast leading up to harvest was free of heatwaves and rain, allowing the grapes to mature slowly and evenly to reach their optimal development. The Pinot Noir was unhurriedly harvested between September 3 — 20, one of the many advantages of growing grapes overlooking the cool Pacific Ocean. Chardonnay was picked September 17 — 26 and finally the slower ripening Pinotage on September 23 — 28. Our new block of Chardonnay, just off Meyers Grade Road had its first harvest in 2016 and the fruit is showing great promise. The lasting memory of the harvest is a vision of perfect bunches of grapes, with no side wings to delay the ripening, even berry size and a balanced crop hanging on the vines. These wines are vibrant and aromatic with excellent acidity.

**WINEMAKING:** The grapes for this Pinot Noir were handpicked during the cool hours of the night in small two-gallon picking 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 barreled in a combination of 40% new and 60% neutral French oak. Throughout the 10 months of barrel aging, the clones and different vineyard lots were kept separate to maintain their distinct flavor profiles and structural components as blending elements.

**TASTING NOTES:** Bright aromas of black raspberry and bing cherry meld with savory cured meats, spiced amber and a delicate floral touch of violets. Exuberant black cherry, raspberry and red fruits greet the palate followed by warm spice and earth. Refined, supple tannins and the Fort Ross Vineyard signature minerality are revealed through the layered, mouthwatering finish. With its lively acidity and extraordinary balance this classic coastal Pinot Noir will elegantly evolve.

**COMPOSITION:** 100% Pinot Noir  
**APPELLATION:** Fort Ross-Seaview, Sonoma Coast  
**ESTATE GROWN:** Fort Ross Vineyard  
**SELECTIONS:** Calera, Pommard, Swan  
**AGING:** 10 months in French oak; 40% new  
**ALCOHOL:** 13.5%  
**HARVESTED:** September 3 — 20, 2016  
**BOTTLING:** August, 2017, Unfined & Unfiltered  
**CASES PRODUCED:** 309 cases, 750ml  
**WINEMAKER:** Jeff Pisoni