



Platinum Plus!

Fort Ross | 2017 Pinot Noir

Fort Ross Vineyard, Fort Ross - Seaview, Sonoma Coast

When Lester and Linda Schwartz first began Fort Ross Vineyard and Winery in 1988, they wisely planted a test block of fourteen different varieties. The results showed that the incomparable Pinot Noir would yield the best fruit from the land located on a coastal ridge directly on the Pacific Ocean. Fort Ross Vineyard currently consists of 52 acres of planted vines, of which 40 acres are rooted in Pinot Noir.

"Our vines are extremely low in yield," pointed out Lester Schwartz. "We get less than two tons an acre and we drop fruit two or three times a year."

Uniquely, Fort Ross Vineyard and Winery does not release its wines strictly by vintage. "We only release a wine when it is ready for release," informed Schwartz. "This drives some of our employees crazy, but it's paramount for our wines and best for our consumers."

First releases occurred in 2001, a miniscule 64 cases. Since then, the winery has grown to its present level of between 3,500 and 4,000 cases annually.

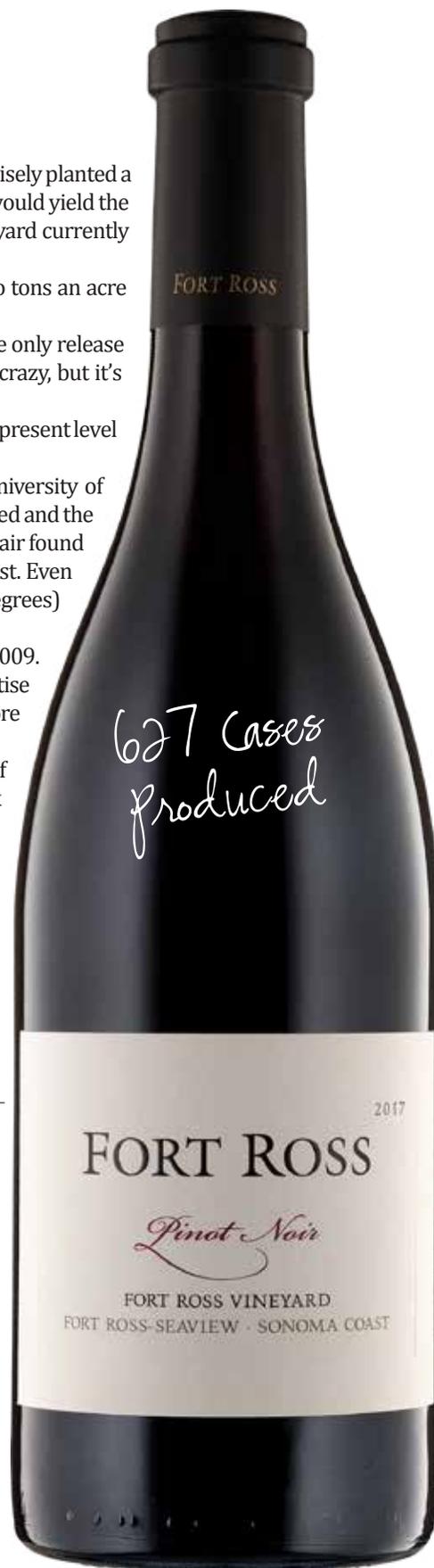
Lester and Linda Schwartz are both native South Africans who met as students at the University of Cape Town in the 1960's, where they developed a mutual interest in wine. San Francisco beckoned and the couple relocated to the City by the Bay. It wasn't long before they caught the wine bug, and the pair found (after a four year search) a breathtaking piece of land just above Fort Ross on the Sonoma Coast. Even the annual rainfall of the area (75 to 125 inches) and the temperature flux (55 to above 85 degrees) couldn't deter the persistent twosome.

The winemaker for Fort Ross Vineyard and Winery is Jeff Pisoni, who came to the winery in 2009. Jeff is the third generation of his family to be involved in winemaking, and he gained great expertise at the likes of Peter Michael Winery (Knights Valley) and Bernardus Winery (Carmel Valley) before coming to Fort Ross. Over the years, his efforts have proved very fruitful for the winery.

Consumers, industry publications and competitions have heartily embraced the wines of Fort Ross Vineyard and Winery since its inception. Most knowledgeable wine enthusiasts rank its wines among the top Pinot Noirs from both the United States and abroad.

The philosophy behind the vineyard and winery defines its current status. "Fort Ross was not conceived as a routine farming project, but rather as a visionary endeavor with each decision made to increase the intensity and complexity of the fruit, with the goal of producing wine that combines luscious fruit, elegance, structure and balance reflecting the cool maritime terroir of the vineyard," concluded Lester Schwartz.

Wineries like Fort Ross Vineyard and Winery are a joy for consumers to experience. The fact that they produce exceptional wines is just icing on the proverbial cake.



Accolades & Tasting Notes

92 POINTS -Robert Parker's *The Wine Advocate*

92 POINTS - *Jeb*

The grapes for the Fort Ross 2017 Pinot Noir were handpicked from the Fort Ross Vineyard, an estate mountain site that overlooks the Sonoma Coast in the Fort Ross-Seaview AVA. Here, the Pinot Noir produces wines with great depth, concentration, vibrant aromatics and acidity. On the nose, this wine offers bright aromas of raspberry and Bing cherry with hints of earthy spice and licorice. Cherry, raspberry and red plum flavors greet the palate, while refined, supple tannins and fresh minerality are revealed through the layered, mouthwatering finish. Aged 10 months in oak. 100% Pinot Noir. Enjoy!



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