

GOLD MEDAL
WINE CLUB'S

Pinot Noir Press



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FORT ROSS VINEYARD & WINERY

Marvelous Pinot Noir by-the-Sea from Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery is among the finest to be found anywhere.



When Lester and Linda Schwartz first began Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery in 1988, they wisely planted a test block of fourteen different varietals. 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 & 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 to 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. When the wine bug beckoned, 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.

Consumers, industry publications and competitions have heartily embraced the wines of Fort Ross Vineyard & 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 & Winery are a joy for consumers to experience. The fact that they produce exceptional wines is just icing on the proverbial cake.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Winemaker Jeff Pisoni is the third generation of his family to be involved in winemaking. Young Jeff was influenced by his family farm and vineyards and he determined to become a winemaker early in life. He earned an enology degree from California State University at Fresno and gained expertise with the likes of Peter Michael Winery (Knights Valley) and Bernardus Winery (Carmel Valley), both top echelon wineries in their respective locales. Jeff regards his winemaking as the interwoven art, science and craft aspects of his trade along with his long term love affair with nature and its effect on grapes and wine. His efforts have proved very fruitful with numerous accolades and high scores in both competitions and periodical ratings.

FORT ROSS SYMPOSIUM 2011, SONOMA COAST

Thankfully, the Pinot Noir thrives in the harsh environs of the Sonoma Coast. This Pinot Noir release includes a small (3%) blend of Pinotage. Fruit was handpicked at night and barreled in 15% new French Oak and 85% older French oak. The appellation is the newly designated Fort Ross-SeaView AVA. Aromas of dark fruits and black tea with a hint of sage introduce the black cherry and raspberry flavors. The Pinotage adds subtle notes of spice and bramble. Some plum is apparent with whispers of nutmeg and vanilla.

Cases Produced: 548

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Sonoma Coast

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