



2007 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

VINEYARDS	28% Thorn Ridge, 19% Rayhill, 17% Sexton, 15% Morris, 11% Guidici, 4% Horse Ridge, 2% Connell, 2% O'Connor and 2% Keefer
FERMENTATION	5 day cold soak in open top fermenters, hand punched down 1 to 3 times per day, free run sent directly to barrel, press wine settled and barreled separately
BARREL AGING	10 months in 100% French oak, 52% new, 48% one, two and three year old barrels
BOTTLED	July 2008
PRODUCTION	440 cases 750ml, 23 cases 1.5L

Each vintage since our inaugural 2002, Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée. Akiko and Ken Freeman, with winemaker Ed Kurtzman and assistant winemaker Eric Buffington, taste each barrel of Pinot in the winery from that vintage and choose their favorites. Then, each person's top barrels are put together in a blend (or cuvée), and we subsequently taste each of the blends, blind, so that no one knows whose favorite barrels are in which blend. We call this Akiko's Cuvée since her blend always wins this blind tasting.

In the 2007 Akiko's, each of the 9 Pinot Noir vineyards from which Freeman sources fruit is represented. For the second year in a row, the top vineyards in the blend were from the Sebastopol Hills area of the Sonoma Coast and Russian River. This region lies to the south of the Bodega Highway, just west of Sebastopol. Ted Klopp's Thorn Ridge Vineyard and the Rayhill Vineyard make up 47% of the '07 Akiko's.

Another excellent Sebastopol Hills site, Jim Pratt's Sexton Road Vineyard, added another 17% to the mix. Then a rookie year vineyard, Morris Ranch, located in the Petaluma Gap area, contributed 15% to the final wine. After Morris in terms of percentage is the Guidici Vineyard. This is right across the street from Freeman's new vineyard near Occidental. Horse Ridge, another newcomer for Freeman in '07, comes in next at 5%. Rounding out the 2007 Akiko's were Freeman favorites Connell, O'Connor and Keefer.

In contrast to the atypically flamboyant 2006 version, the '07 Akiko's is back to its more demure and elegantly sophisticated self. As such, it takes a little bit of time and aeration to bring out this wine's lovely nose of ripe plums, Bing cherries and light toast. The palate is "classic" 2007 in its soft, supple richness and underlying fruit. We always recommend laying down the Akiko's Cuvée for a few years to allow it to evolve and open up. Expect the 2007 vintage to hit its stride sometime in 2011 and last well through 2016.