



2021 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

48% Heintz Ranch
36% Searby
16% Morelli Lane

CLONES

UCD 4

FERMENTATION

Fermented in barrel and aged on lees.

BARREL AGING

10 months in French oak:
12% new
88% neutral

BOTTLING

July 2022

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 560 cases



Ryo-fu is Japanese for “cool breeze,” a fitting name for this Russian River Valley Chardonnay shaped by the chilly winds that blow in from the Pacific Ocean. Our local ryo-fu, along with the region’s famous fog and sandy loam soil, create ideal growing conditions for this vineyard.

Fortunately, 2021 was a smoke-free vintage for all of coastal California, and the first vintage since 2016 that brought virtually no wildfires in Sonoma wine country. This was in contrast to 2020, when the entire county’s vineyards were threatened by smoke. Though we were able to make a small amount of Ryo-fu in 2020, 2021 marks a return to our normal production size.

The three vineyards that make up the 2021 Ryo-fu Chardonnay are Heintz Ranch, Searby, and Morelli Lane. Heintz is located just east of the town of Occidental, on the western edge of the Green Valley of Russian River Valley appellation. Since 2003, Freeman has purchased the same block of Chardonnay from Charlie Heintz, which he planted in 1982. They’re the oldest vines we work with. The Chardonnay that comes from Heintz gives the Ryo-fu its elegant, stone fruit and old-world character. It could easily stand alone as a vineyard designate, as it did for Freeman in 2003, but we love how it works in the Ryo-fu blend. Charlie also farms Searby, which is located on Occidental Road just southwest of Freeman.

Morelli Lane was a new vineyard for us in 2020, so 2021 is the second year we’ve worked with this site. Morelli Lane is located just north of Heintz—it’s practically a neighboring property—and was planted in 1995 by the Dutton family. We bought Thomas Road Pinot Noir grapes from the Duttons for Freeman’s first vintage in 2002, and we have been working with them ever since.

The 2021 Freeman Ryo-fu Chardonnay has a light gold color and a fruit-forward nose of Fuji apples, nutmeg, honey and orange zest. It’s one of our more full-bodied Chardonnays with a full palate of ripe stone fruit, lemon cream and marzipan. With its strong acidity on the finish, this Ryo-fu will show well from 2023 through 2029.