



2023 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARD

47% Maddocks Vineyard
28% Dutton Ranch
25% Heintz Ranch

CLONES

See's Selection, Raffo Selection
and UC Davis 4

FERMENTATION

Fermented in barrel and aged on the lees.

BARREL AGING

9 months in French oak:
12% new
7% one-year-old
81% neutral

BOTTLING

June 2024

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 930 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.

This was a European-style vintage for us in California. We had plenty of rain in the winter, and the temperature remained very cool through the month of March. This led to a late bud break, which happened in the beginning of April. That’s a full month later than average, and the vines never caught up during the growing season. We didn’t bring in any of the Chardonnay that went into Ryo-fu until October 4, and we picked the last block on October 24.

Maddocks, a new vineyard for Freeman, comprises the largest share of the 2023 Ryo-fu. The vineyard is located off of Green Valley Road, not far from KR Ranch. It was planted in 1987 to the See’s Selection of Chardonnay, which is an offshoot of Wente. Art Robledo, Freeman’s vineyard manager for Gloria and Yu-ki, handles the farming at Maddocks, so we were thrilled when he offered us this site to add to our Ryo-fu.

Another new addition is the Dutton Ranch Big Block, located on Graton Road in Green Valley. This section of Dutton was planted by Warren Dutton in 1995 with the Raffo Selection, another version of Wente clone Chardonnay.

The only Chardonnay vineyard represented in every Ryo-fu we’ve ever produced is Heintz Ranch. Freeman has purchased the same block from Charlie Heintz since 2003. Infusing Ryo-fu with elegant, stone fruit and Old World character, the Heintz Chardonnay could easily stand alone as a vineyard designate, but we love how it works in this blend.

The 2023 Freeman Ryo-fu Chardonnay has a light golden color and beautiful clarity. The nose starts out with Bosc pear aromas that evolve with air into the scent of pure Gravenstein apples. There are also touches of lemon zest, baking spices and the slightest bit of toastiness. On the palate, the high acidity is a testament to the cool 2023 growing season. Decant this wonderful Chardonnay to allow the full experience to shine through. Enjoy the ’23 Ryo-fu from 2025 through 2032.