



## 2023 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

### WINE NOTES

#### VINEYARDS

75% Yu-ki Estate  
16% Gloria Estate  
9% Pratt

#### FERMENTATION

Five-day cold soak in open-top fermenters, hand-punched down one to three times per day. Free-run sent directly to barrel, press wine settled and barreled separately.

#### BARREL AGING

11 months in French oak:  
29% new  
5% one-year-old  
14% two-year-old  
52% neutral

#### BOTTLING

August 2024

#### PRODUCTION

750 ml = 425 cases

Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée each year since our inaugural 2002 vintage. To make this special wine, Akiko Freeman and her winemaking staff taste every barrel of our Pinot Noir from the current vintage, and everyone chooses their favorites. Next, each person's top barrels are blended together to create multiple cuvées. The sample blends are then tasted blind, and a friendly competition ensues. Whose blend will be the team favorite? The resulting wine is called Akiko's Cuvée, because Akiko's blend almost always wins.

In 2023's trials, Akiko preferred our estate Gloria and Yu-ki vineyards, as well as Pratt. The clones we used from Yu-ki included Calera, Mt. Eden, 2A Wadenswil, 23 Mariafeld, 144 and Dijon 667. From Gloria Estate, the clones included Pommard and Calera, with smaller amounts of Swan, 115 and Martini. From the Pratt vineyard, one barrel of 2A Wadenswil made it into the final blend.

This was one of the coolest and latest harvests we've seen at Freeman, comparable with the 2005, 2010 and 2011 vintages. The 2023 growing season brought a normal spring followed by cooler summer weather. However, it differed from previous chilly years in that the winter was cold and rainy, leading to a late bud break. For most of our sites, we didn't see much activity on the vines until early April, when bud break would normally occur in early March. An April bud break is more common in Oregon and Burgundy, and a rare occurrence in Sonoma County.

Typically, Akiko's Cuvée takes the longest to develop in the bottle, and we expect that the high-acid, low-alcohol 2023 vintage will follow the same path. The wine will take its time to evolve over the next few years. Aromas of woodland strawberries, black raspberries, walnuts and toasted oak subtly make their way out of the glass after some aeration time. The well-structured palate has plenty of acidity and tannins, and fruit to keep all the elements in balance. The 2023 vintage should be showing well from mid-2026 through 2040.

