



2014 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

33% Gloria Estate
33% Yu-ki Estate
10% Campbell
10% Sexton
10% Thorn Ridge
4% Rayhill

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
57% one-year-old
14% two-year-old

BOTTLING

August 2015

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 420 cases
1.5 L = 18 cases



Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée every vintage since 2002. To make this *cuvée*, Winemaker Akiko Freeman, Assistant Winemaker Gavin Sharrocks (since 2013), and Winemaking Consultant Ed Kurtzman taste each barrel of Pinot in the winery from a particular vintage and choose their favorites. Each person's top picks are then put together in various blends (or *cuvées*), which are tasted, blind, to find a first choice. No one knows whose favorite barrels are in which blend, but somehow Akiko's pick almost always wins this blind tasting. Ken Freeman also joins in the final stages of the tasting, and has proven to be an excellent tiebreaker.

For the first time ever, Freeman's two estate properties, Gloria and Yu-ki, make up the majority of the Akiko's Cuvée in 2014—one-third each. Four out of the five clones we harvested from Gloria made it into Akiko's as well as all five clones from Yu-ki.

The next three sites each make up ten percent of the 2014 Akiko's Cuvée. Sexton is Jim Pratt's excellent vineyard in the Sebastopol Hills, not far from Ted Klopp's equally fine Thorn Ridge Vineyard. Annapolis' Campbell Ranch, the only vineyard in Akiko not within a 10-minute drive of the winery, also provided 10% to the 2014 Cuvée. Finally, Akiko chose one barrel of the Rayhill vineyard Pinot for this year's blend. Rayhill has been a dependable part of the Akiko's Cuvée for the past 11 vintages.

By far the most complex of the 2014 Freeman Pinot Noirs, this year's Akiko's Cuvée has a beguiling, subtle nose of cinnamon and dried rose petals, and speaks of the cool Sonoma Coast. The palate is shy at first, but soon comes alive with inviting flavors of black cherries, spring wildflowers and toasty oak. The acidity of the Akiko's Cuvée is the highest of all the '14 Freeman Pinots.

Wait a few years for this wine to open up, after which it should drink well through 2026.