



## 2017 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

### WINE NOTES

#### VINEYARDS

33% Gloria Estate  
25% Yu-ki Estate  
14% KR  
14% Campbell Ranch  
14% 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  
19% one-year-old  
19% two-year-old  
14% three-year-old  
19% neutral

#### BOTTLING

August 2018

#### PRODUCTION

750 ml = 450 cases  
1.5 L = 20 cases



Each year since our inaugural 2002 vintage, Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée. 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 a cuvée. 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.

Akiko's five favorite vineyards are well-represented in the 2017 Akiko's Cuvée, with Freeman's estate Gloria and Yu-ki vineyards making up 58% of the blend. Akiko selected the sites, clones, spacing and row orientation for Gloria and Yu-ki, so it's not surprising that these vineyards produce special wines. The 2017 blend also includes fruit from three vineyards with which Freeman has a long history: KR (formerly Keefer), Pratt, and Campbell, each of which contributed three barrels to the 21-barrel cuvée.

2017 was an ideal growing season for all of Freeman's vineyards. We had our first plentiful rainfall since 2011 and experienced near-perfect weather from bud break until just before harvest. Things changed in late August, when two major heatwaves occurred—the second one much more intense than the first. The temperature spike accelerated our harvest dates by a good three weeks, but the fruit remained in perfect shape and nothing became overripe. (When extreme heat occurs, Akiko always takes care to bring in the fruit before it has a chance to shrivel on the vines.)

The dark ruby-colored 2017 Akiko's Cuvée has subtle aromas of wild raspberries, sage, roasted tea and violets. In its typical fashion, the wine is shy on the palate at first, but after some time in the glass, it comes alive with an extravagant blend of fresh, ripe berries, herbs and a hint of French oak. The acid balance is perfect, and the finish is long. We recommend letting the wine rest in the cellar until late 2020, and it will continue to open up through 2030.