



2018 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

41% Yu-ki Estate
32% Gloria Estate
14% KR Ranch
9% Pratt
4% Campbell Ranch

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:
36% new
18% one-year-old
18% two-year-old
9% three-year-old
19% neutral

BOTTLING

July 2019

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 450 cases
1.5 L = 20 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.

A large majority of grapes for this year's Akiko's Cuvée came from Freeman's two estate vineyards, Yu-ki and Gloria. Both sites had an incredible year in 2018, and Akiko especially loved the fruit from this vintage. Nearly a quarter of the blend was made from Pinot Noir grown in the two vineyards we've worked with the longest: KR Ranch (since 2004) and Pratt (2005). The cuvee also includes one barrel from Campbell Ranch.

The 2018 vintage was a winemaker's and grapegrower's dream. The weather was absolutely perfect for producing a large, balanced crop, and for the first time since 2012 we had a year without late summer heat waves. This meant we were able to harvest at our own pace rather than being told by Mother Nature that we needed to get the grapes off the vines ASAP to avoid overripeness. Not only was the fruit perfectly mature, it was some of the cleanest Pinot Noir we've seen in our 17 vintages.

The 2018 Akiko's Cuvée has a brilliantly clear, purple color. The nose and flavors lean on the savory side, which is typical for this wine. This was such a tremendous vintage that the Akiko's aroma—normally slow to open up—jumps right out of the glass. Scents of wet earth, thyme and French oak show beautifully without the need for aeration. The wine's seamless palate offers a perfect balance of Pinot Noir spice, leaner fruits, oak, soft tannins and bright acidity. Drink this from late 2020 through 2030.