



2010 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

48% Keefer Ranch
36% Heintz Ranch
16% Black Emerald Vineyard

FERMENTATION & BARREL AGING

Fermented and aged 14 months sur lies

- 100% French Oak
 - 20% new
 - 80% one-, two- and three-year-old barrels

BOTTLING

December 14, 2011

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 592 cases



2010 was the season which a lot of wineries in California refer to as the summer that never happened. From the very cool, wet spring until the last week in August, temperatures rarely reached 70 degrees in the vineyards, and the direct sunshine on the vines was obscured by weeks of fog. Luckily, at the end of August, and in the first week of September, we saw record highs in the Russian River Valley and the Chardonnay was given a chance to ripen before the October rains set in.

The largest component of the 2010 Ryo-fu Chardonnay comes from the Keefer Ranch in the Green Valley sub-appellation of the Russian River Valley. Freeman has purchased both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from Marcy Keefer since 2004, and it's the only vineyard from which we receive both varieties. Marcy and her son Craig are two of the best farmers we work with, and we're honored to make wine from their vineyard. The Chardonnay from Keefer provides the backbone of acidity to the Ryo-fu, as well some of the subtle fruits found in the nose of the wine.

Charlie Heintz's famous Heintz Ranch makes up the second highest percentage of the blend. Heintz Ranch is located just above the town of Occidental, on the western edge of the Russian River Valley appellation. Since 2003, Freeman has purchased the same block of Chardonnay from Charlie. The pear and anise flavors often found in our Ryo-fu Chardonnay come from the Heintz Ranch component of the blend.

2010 was the sixth vintage of Chardonnay we have received from Black Emerald. Dennis and Mary Black sell Freeman the half acre of east/west facing rows off of their home ranch. Their vineyard is on Vine Hill Road, just across the street from Kistler, in the center of the Russian River Valley appellation. The Ryo-fu Chardonnay benefits from the ripe, high-toned fruit we find at Black Emerald.

It's surprising that the 2010 Freeman Ryo-fu Chardonnays is one of the ripest and most fruit forward we've produced, given the extremely cool growing season. The last time we saw vintage weather like this was in 2005, and that Ryo-fu was quite similar to the 2010. There are inviting peach and pear aromas in the nose that are followed by a rich, mouth-filling palate. Lush tropical fruit flavors are apparent, with pineapple and mango notes that linger into the finish. The 2010 Ryo-fu is one of our most approachable Chardonnays to dated, and we expect it to be at its best between mid-2012 and 2015.