



2013 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

37% Keefer Ranch
37% Heintz Ranch
15% Black Emerald
7% Mill Station
4% Sullivan

FERMENTATION & BARREL AGING

Fermented and aged 14 months *sur lies*
in French oak:
11% new
89% used

BOTTLING

December 2014

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 542 cases

We saw a prolific vintage in 2013 not only for Pinot Noir, but also for Chardonnay. The weather was ideal during May and June for a perfect set on the vines. After a warm, dry summer, we began the Chardonnay harvest in September, earlier by a month than in any of the past eight years.

The largest components of the 2013 Ryo-fu Chardonnay come from Keefer Ranch and Heintz Ranch. Freeman has purchased both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from Marcy Keefer since 2004, and it is the only vineyard from which we receive both varieties. The Chardonnay from Keefer provides a backbone of acidity to the Ryo-fu, as well some of the subtle fruits found in the nose. Keefer Ranch is located in the Green Valley sub appellation of the Russian River Valley.

Heintz Ranch is located just southeast of the town of Occidental, on the western edge of the Russian River Valley appellation. Since 2003, Freeman has been purchasing the same block of Chardonnay, planted by Charlie Heintz in 1982. The oldest vines we work with at Freeman, the Heintz Chardonnay gives our Ryo-fu its elegant, stone fruit and old world character. It could easily stand alone as a vineyard designate, as it did for Freeman in 2003; but we love how it works in the Ryo-fu blend.

Fifteen percent of the 2013 Ryo-fu Chardonnay comes from Dennis and Mary Black's Black Emerald Vineyard, where Duff Bevill does excellent work as the vineyard manager. It is always the last fruit we harvest at Freeman, even though it's located in the heart of the Russian River Valley, a slightly warmer area than Heintz and Keefer. We've been getting a few tons of Black Emerald Chardonnay most years since the first Ryo-fu in 2004.

In 2013 the Ryo-fu also includes small amounts of Chardonnay from two Dutton Ranch vineyards: Mill Station and Sullivan. They're close to the Freeman Winery, and virtually right next to each other.

The 2013 Freeman Ryo-fu Chardonnay has a light to medium straw color and shows off the ripeness of the 2013 harvest in the nose. There are aromas of apricots, passion fruit, and honey with subtle hints of fennel and toast. The texture on the palate also demonstrates how 2013 was ideal, with a rich structure we haven't seen for several years. Fine acidity cuts through the viscous mouthfeel from the mid palate right into the finish and allows the fresh apple and mango flavors to shine. Drink the 2013 Ryo-fu from 2015 through 2018.

