



2017 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

35% Heintz Ranch
28% KR Ranch
26% Lymar
11% Searby

CLONES

UCD 4 and Rued

FERMENTATION

Fermented in barrel and aged on lees

BARREL AGING

10 months in French oak:
10% new
90% mostly neutral

BOTTLING

July 9, 2018

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 740 cases

Ryo-fu is Japanese for “cool breeze,” a fitting name for this Russian River Valley Chardonnay shaped by the chilly winds that come off the Pacific Ocean. Our local *ryo-fu*, along with the region’s famous fog and sandy soils, create ideal growing conditions for this Chardonnay.

As usual, the largest components for the 2017 Ryo-fu Chardonnay came from Heintz Ranch and KR Ranch (formerly Keefer Ranch). Heintz is located just southeast of the town of Occidental, on the western edge of the Russian River Valley appellation. Freeman has purchased the same block of Chardonnay from Charlie Heintz since 2003, and his are the oldest vines that we work with (they were planted in 1982). Imbuing Ryo-fu with elegant, stone fruit and Old World character, the Heintz Chardonnay could easily stand alone as a vineyard designate, but we love how it works in this blend. Chardonnay from the KR Ranch, located in the Green Valley sub-appellation of the Russian River Valley, provides the backbone of acidity to Ryo-fu, as well some of its subtle fruit aromas.

The Ryo-fu also includes fruit from Searby Vineyard on Occidental Road and Lynmar’s Quail Hill Vineyard. This is our third year working with Searby fruit, farmed by Charlie Heintz, and our second year working with the fruit from Lynmar, which has been growing its own estate fruit since the early 1980s.

Living up to the Chardonnay’s name, the 2017 growing season had its share of cool breezes. At first, it looked like we were heading for a late September or early October harvest. Then two late August heat waves arrived to change the plan, and we picked all of our Chardonnay by mid-September instead.

The 2017 Ryo-fu will be one of our longer-aging Chardonnays, based on its youthful character upon release. Medium straw in color, the wine has aromas of toasted coconut, bacon and some pleasant reductive notes. With some air, a floral and honey perfumed nose emerges. The palate has a ripe fruit presence with pear and apricot notes, all wound together with some of the highest acid we’ve seen in Ryo-fu. These elements soften nicely with some time in the glass. The wine has a very long finish, which leads us to believe the best drinking window will be late 2019 through 2025.

