



2018 RYO-FU CHARDONNAY

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

29% Heintz Ranch
29% Searby
27% KR Ranch
15% Yu-ki Estate

CLONES

UCD 4, UCD5, Rued

FERMENTATION

Fermented in barrel and aged on lees

BARREL AGING

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

BOTTLING

July 2019

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 956 cases
1.5 L = 30 cases



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

The 2018 growing season was ideal for all grape varieties in California, allowing our Chardonnay to ripen slowly and evenly. We harvested the fruit toward the second half of September and early October—normal timing for us after five remarkably early vintages.

Heintz Ranch and Searby Vineyard provided the largest components for the 2018 Ryo-fu Chardonnay. 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 (planted in 1982) that we work with. Infusing 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. The Searby Vineyard on Occidental Road, an excellent site that is also farmed by Charlie Heintz, contributes an equal amount of fruit to the blend.

Grapes from KR Ranch in the Green Valley sub-appellation of the Russian River Valley provide the backbone of acidity to Ryo-fu, as well as some of its subtle fruit aromas. The blend also includes our first vintage of Chardonnay from Freeman’s Yu-ki Estate Vineyard.

The 2018 Ryo-fu is one of the most Chablis-like Chardonnays we’ve ever made. The nose is a subtle mix of stone and citrus fruits, along with vanilla and a hint of brown sugar. The wine shows crisp acidity on the palate, with more mineral than fruit flavors. Drink this vintage now through 2024, and don’t be afraid to decant it while it’s young—it does very well with 30 or more minutes of aeration.