

Your Weekly Treat: Freeman 2010 Pinot Noir

Freeman's 2010 Pinot Noir, Keefer Ranch vineyard showcases what wine lovers fall for in Russian River Valley

Pinots: The wine is perfumed, large-framed, and palate-flattering, but entwined with a lively cut of acidity that gives it lift and definition. The world's wine map is porcupine-pinned with producers claiming to bottle "Burgundian" style Pinot Noir, but Freeman has a case to make here—not so much in the juicy Californian ripeness of the fruit, but in the refinement of the wine's balance. There is a connoisseur's delicacy behind the obvious pleasure.

Financial services executive Ken Freeman and his wife Akiko—who is also the assistant winemaker—own this small winery in the very charming and somewhat otherworldly Sonoma town of Sebastopol (a "nuclear free zone" whose town council once famously rejected a company's offer of free city-wide wi-fi on New Age-tinged health grounds). Keefer Ranch, a vineyard in the cool-climate pocket of Green Valley (a sub-region within the Russian River Valley appellation), has been a prime grape source for the Freemans for six of the winery's 10 years of existence. Given the quality league it's playing in and the miniscule quantities Freeman produces (less than 350 cases), the 2010's \$48 price tag is the soul of reasonableness.

