



2021 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

WINE NOTES

VINEYARDS

77% Yu-ki Estate
14% Gloria Estate
9% Pratt

FERMENTATION

Five-day cold soak in open-top fermenters, hand-punched down one to three times per day. Free-run juice sent directly to barrel, press wine settled and barreled separately.

BARREL AGING

11 months in French oak:
24% new
19% one-year-old
38% two-year-old
10% three-year-old
9% neutral

BOTTLING

August 2022

PRODUCTION

750 ml = 472 cases
1.5 L = 20 cases



Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée each year since our inaugural 2002 vintage. To make this special wine, Akiko Freeman and her winemaking staff taste every barrel of our Pinot Noir from the current vintage and everyone chooses their favorites. Next, each person's top barrels are blended together to create multiple cuvées. The sample blends are then tasted blind, and a friendly competition ensues. Whose blend will be the team favorite? The resulting wine is called Akiko's Cuvée, because Akiko's blend almost always wins.

A large majority of grapes for this year's Akiko's Cuvée came from Freeman's two estate vineyards, Yu-ki and Gloria. The clones Akiko selected from Yu-ki include the two Swiss clones, 2A Wadenswil and 23 Mariafeld, along with Calera and two Dijon clones, 667 and 828. From Gloria, the hillside vineyard right next to our winery and cave, she chose Calera, Swan, Pommard and 115. The blend also includes two barrels from the Pratt Vineyard, which is a favorite of Akiko's.

We had to take a year off from making this wine in 2020 due to the wildfires in Sonoma County and our lack of Pinot Noir grapes that year. However, 2021 was an excellent year for vineyards up and down the California coast, with no wildfire issues. Most of our Pinot Noir vineyards saw an abundant crop, and the fruit ripened slowly from the end of August through mid- to late September.

The 2021 Akiko's Cuvée is one of the fruitiest and most approachable examples of our "reserve" bottling that we've produced in years. The nose presents a blend of blackberries, black cherries and rose water. Akiko's has the highest acidity level of all of our 2021 Pinots, yet it is balanced on the palate by firm tannins, abundant fruitiness and French oak nuances. The finish goes on for several minutes with the acidity, fruit and oak playing off of each other. Try the 2021 Akiko's in 2024 and hold some in the cellar through 2035 or longer.