



## The Prince of Pinot



### 2008 Ryo-Fu Russian River Valley Chardonnay

14.1% alc., 550 cases, \$44. Sourced from Heintz Vineyard, Keefer Ranch and Black Emerald Vineyard. Aged 14 months in 20% new French oak, barrel fermented with 100% MLF.

Beautifully proportioned with just the right touch of oak. Crisp and clean with appealing flavors of pear, white peach and creme brulee. Not at all tiring to drink like many California Chardonnays. One of the top California Chardonnays I have tasted from this vintage. Very good.



### 2008 Akiko's Cuvée Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 420 cases, \$56. A barrel selection chosen by Akiko, Ken, and winemakers Ed Kurtzman and Eric Buffington. Each person's top barrels are blended and tasted blind. Called Akiko's Cuvée, because her blend nearly always wins this blind tasting. Keefer Ranch fruit makes up the largest portion. Aged 11 months in 38% new French oak.

Shy, teasing aromatics with scents of wild berries, oak toast and cut flowers. Rich and satisfying red and purple fruits on the palate with caressing tannins. Very smoothly textured and seamless. Tasted the next day and the day after from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine retained its appeal indicating age ability. A stunning wine that will easily go 15 years. My wife went gaga over this wine.



### 2008 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

1,473 cases, \$44. Sourced from five vineyards, with a third from Ted Klopp's Thorn Ridge Vineyard. Aged 11 months in 47% new French oak.

Richer and earthier than the Sonoma Coast bottling with bright flavors of ripe Bing cherries, dark berries, oak and cola. Still rather closed but the future is very promising for this wine. Has the bones (tannins and acidity) to age ten years. Good.



### 2008 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

1425 cases, \$44. 44% Rayhill Vineyard, 32% Guidici Vineyard, 24% Sexton Vineyard. Aged 11 months in 40% new French oak.

Very approachable wine that is medium-weighted with charming black cherry fruit and soft tannins. The nose is quite delicately fruited with notes of dried rose petals. I liked this a lot. Very good.



### 2008 Keefer Ranch Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 445 cases, \$48. Aged 11 months in 35% new French oak.

Bright scents of strawberry and raspberry tart with hints of baking spice and orange tea. Tasty panoply of redder fruits with herbs and tea leaves mixed in. Silky smooth with soft tannins, bright acidity and an appealing elegance. A sweetheart wine that is very approachable now and quite easy to drink. Very good.

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