



## 2006 AKIKO'S CUVÉE PINOT NOIR

<b>VINEYARDS</b>	30% Rayhill, 25% Thorn Ridge, 15% Guidici, 7% Connell, 5% Sexton, 5% Bailey, 5% Keefer, 5% O'Connor and 3% Meredith Estate
<b>FERMENTATION</b>	5 day cold soak in open top fermenters, hand punched down 1 to 3 times per day, free run sent directly to barrel, press wine settled and barreled separately
<b>BARREL AGING</b>	10 months in 100% French oak, 30% new, 70% one, two and three year old barrels
<b>BOTTLED</b>	July 12, 2007
<b>PRODUCTION</b>	505 cases 750ml, 18 cases 1.5L

Each vintage since our inaugural 2002, Freeman has released an Akiko's Cuvée. Akiko and Ken Freeman, with winemaker Ed Kurtzman and (starting with the 2006 Akiko's) assistant winemaker Eric Buffington, taste each barrel of Pinot in the winery from a given vintage and choose their favorites. Then, each person's favorite barrels are put together in a blend (or cuvée), and we subsequently taste each of the blends, blind, so that no one knows whose favorite barrels are in which blend. For the 5th year in a row, Akiko's blend was everyone's first choice.

2006 represents the first year since 2003 when Akiko chose at least one barrel from each of Freeman's vineyards to go into her cuvée. The largest shares of the blend come from the coolest parts of the Sonoma Coast appellation. The Rayhill Vineyard was Akiko's favorite in 2006 as she selected 7 barrels from there. Rayhill is just off Bodega Highway on top of a cool and windy hill. Akiko's 2nd favorite lot of the year came from a very similar site, Ted Klopp's Thorn Ridge Vineyard. 5 Thorn Ridge barrels were judged worthy for her cuvée by Akiko.

3 barrels of Guidici Vineyard made it into our reserve equivalent wine. This was a great feat for Guidici, which is near Occidental, since it was its first year of real production. Smaller amounts of Meredith Estate and Connell, Sexton, Bailey, Keefer, and O'Connor Vineyards were also among Akiko's selections.

Usually, the Akiko's Cuvée has the shyest nose among our Pinot Noirs, but this is not so with the 2006 version. There are intriguing aromas of dried roses, saffras and forest floor which practically jump out of the glass within 5 minutes of the bottle being opened. The palate is pleasantly soft with perfectly balanced acidity and pretty fruit flavors. There is a fair amount of tannin in the long, berry-like finish. We would say the 2006 Akiko's will be approachable soon after release in 2008 and it should drink well for at least 7 more years.