

*Blancaneaux 2000*

At Niebaum-Coppola Estate Winery there exists a fine line between history and art. When Gustave Niebaum originally built the Inglenook Chateau in 1880 he had a clear and focused vision:

to craft world-class wines that spoke of the soil from which they came. He wanted his wines to resonate with a "sense of place." Francis Coppola has turned this vision into a reality with the rare and unique white wine Blancaneaux.



*Niebaum-Coppola*  
RUTHERFORD

Blancaneaux



2000 Blancaneaux

Francis and Eleanor Coppola first purchased a majority of the historic Inglenook property in 1975. Fortuitously, in 1995 they were able to purchase the rest of the original Estate and reunite the property. As was the goal of his predecessors, Coppola was intent on producing what he refers to as a "grand wine." Says Coppola, "What I consider a grand wine has to be a wine that can please contemporary taste, but it has to have an historical aspect, and the vineyards must be at the zenith of what defines an area." The first of these wines was the proprietary wine Rubicon, the flagship wine of the Estate. Beginning with the 1978 vintage, it is a wine that has been meticulously crafted for the world stage.

Now once again, Francis Coppola has made a visionary leap; to create a world-class proprietary white wine as a worthy partner to Rubicon. That wine is Blancaneaux, as captivating and expressive as its name. Literally meaning "white water" in French, Coppola chose the name for its simple beauty and grace, qualities he felt epitomized the extraordinary wine in the bottle. As the white counterpart to Rubicon, Blancaneaux is a blend of Chardonnay, Viognier, Marsanne, and Roussanne and is grown entirely on the Niebaum-Coppola Estate in Rutherford.

**Vineyard Notes:** Blancaneaux is styled after the white wine blends made in the small area around the town of Condrieu in the Northern Rhône region of France. Over the last decade, Dijon clones of Chardonnay along with Viognier, Marsanne, and Roussanne have been planted on the extreme western edge of the property adjacent to Mt. St. John. Although Rutherford is Cabernet country, the five acres that are dedicated to growing white grapes have great morning sun, but due to their proximity to Mt. St. John, these vineyards are in full shade by mid-afternoon. The shade cools the vineyard and lengthens the growing season. Though not conducive to great Cabernet, the location is the perfect place on the Estate to grow white varieties. The winegrowing was successfully adapted to Napa Valley conditions, working extensively to tailor the crop levels and viticultural practices to the unique microclimate that is Rutherford.

**Vintage Notes:** The weather in Rutherford for the 2000 vintage was very kind to the Blancaneaux varieties. The spring was mild, providing for a very good set in the vineyard, thus forecasting a good-size crop come harvest. Spring led into a warm and dry summer until August, when the marine fog rolled into the Napa Valley, cooling the vineyards. The mild August weather was very conducive to the development of the grapes with sunny afternoons and cool mornings and evenings. Full-sun days returned just in time for harvest. The Chardonnay and the Marsanne were picked in September, while the Viognier and the Roussanne hung on until the first week in October.

**Winemaker's Notes:** Blancaneaux is a very exciting wine to make. The Viognier, Marsanne and Roussanne were harvested, whole cluster pressed, barrel fermented, and aged separately in new French oak barrels for eleven months. While the Chardonnay was vinted similarly, it underwent malolactic fermentation softening the acids, while adding a nice buttery and round flavor to the wine. Like Rubicon, we are not trying to create a wine that speaks too much of one of its components but rather speaks volumes about where it is grown. The Chardonnay provides the base of the blend with its weighty yet buttery palate and identifiable familiar flavors of pear and apple. Viognier is just the opposite, with its wild spice flavors and heady aromas of ginger and citrus. The addition of Marsanne with its melon and mineral components and the honeysuckle and floral elements of the Roussanne bring harmony and focus to Blancaneaux. As odd as it sounds, it takes four varieties of these eclectic white grapes to make one wine that has a sense of harmony and finesse.

**Tasting Notes:** Blancaneaux is very rich and inviting. This wine is as beautiful to view as it is to drink. It casts a shiny, translucent, yellow-green hue in the glass.

Fragrant aromas of lemongrass, melon and crème brûlée are a result of blending the Chardonnay with the Viognier, Marsanne, and Roussanne. Juicy flavors of pear, lemon, and ripe honeydew are offered in the smooth and lengthy finish. Blancaneaux is a wonderful aperitif, and it is a great accompaniment to fresh shellfish like lobster and scallops. With its rich notes of citrus and ginger, it will also nicely complement Chinese (French-Chinese) and Vietnamese cuisines. The range of flavors, density of palate and the interest of the aromatics of these four varieties create Blancaneaux—a wine that is worthy to accompany our flagship red wine—Rubicon.

**WINEMAKING ANALYSIS**

**Vineyard:**  
Niebaum-Coppola Estate,  
Saddle Vineyard

**Blend:** 42% Chardonnay,  
31% Viognier, 17% Marsanne,  
10% Roussanne

**Alcohol:** 14.1%

**Total Acid:** .61/100mL

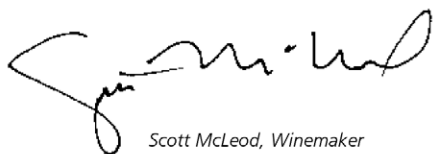
**pH:** 3.47

**Barrel Regimen:** 11 months new  
French oak

**Bottled:** August 2001

**Case Production:**  
1360 (6 Bottle Cases)

**Released:** March 15, 2002



Scott McLeod, Winemaker