



Niebaum-Coppola

ESTATE, VINEYARDS & WINERY

In 1975, Francis and Eleanor Coppola purchased a majority of the historic Inglenook property. After three years of careful study and refinement, they launched an ambitious venture to revitalize the great Cabernet heritage of Inglenook. In 1978, the newly formed Niebaum-Coppola Estate Winery created the first vintage of Rubicon, a proprietary red wine blend. As fate would have it, the remainder of the Inglenook Estate came up for sale in 1995 and the Coppolas succeeded in reuniting this legendary property with the purchase of 70 additional vineyard acres and the Inglenook Chateau.

Soon after reuniting the Estate, Coppola decided 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, Blancaneaux is a blend of Chardonnay, Viognier, Marsanne, and Roussanne and is made from grapes grown entirely on the Niebaum-Coppola Estate in Rutherford.

Vineyard Notes

Beginning in 1994, two Dijon clones of Chardonnay along with Viognier, Marsanne, and Roussanne were planted at the base of Mt. St. John. Although Rutherford is Cabernet country, the six acres that are dedicated to growing white grapes have great morning sun, and 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.

Vintage Notes

The word is out on the 2001 vintage, and the word is ‘classic.’ Already the young wines of 2001 have attracted buyers and critics alike who have likened Napa’s 2001 to the near-perfect vintage of 2000 in Bordeaux. Like all notable harvests in Napa Valley, the growing season needs to be moderate and even, with a slow maturation lasting long into the Fall. In 2001, ideal harvest conditions lasted well into November, and all varieties enjoyed abundant sunshine and warm weather that led to intensely flavored grapes with ideal balance. As Blancaneaux is a blend, all four varieties have their own schedule. The

Chardonnay is always picked first in early September, followed closely by the Viognier. The Marsanne and Roussanne were harvested a full month later in late October.

Winemaker’s Notes

Blancaneaux is a blended wine for all the right reasons. Most importantly, the blend is greater than the sum of its parts. Taken individually, the components appeal to simple pleasures. Blancaneaux asserts a complex personality with more depth of both flavor and aroma than any single variety. In 2001, the Chardonnays have a ripe pear and green apple character. Allowed to undergo malolactic fermentation, the added textural elements create the platform on which the vibrant Viognier can add exotic ginger and lime aromas to the blend. The Marsanne is the earth component possessing a pure mineral element that gives Blancaneaux a reference to a certain place, the Niebaum-Coppola Estate. The Roussanne with its fleshy peach and apricot flavors adds an unctuous and weighty texture to Blancaneaux, rounding and lengthening its finish.

Tasting Notes

Citrus dominates the 2001 Blancaneaux, or at least for a few moments. One of my favorite aspects to Blancaneaux is its almost chameleon-like ability to change in a glass over time. The longer it sits in a glass, the more the pear and apple aromas rise, followed a few moments later by the mineral and earthy tones of the Marsanne. On the palate, initial flavors of pear and peach lead later to flavors of apricots and crème brûlée. I am always amazed that the wine does not appear more oak influenced considering Blancaneaux is barrel fermented in 100% new French oak barrels and left alone for over twelve months. But the fact that the wine does not show more barrel character is a testament to the weight of the wine, the success of blending the four varieties, and, above all, to a great vineyard.

Scott McLeod, Winemaker

APPELLATION: Rutherford, Niebaum-Coppola Estate	BARREL REGIMEN: 12 months in New French Oak	TOTAL ACID: .57/100ml	CASE PRODUCTION: 1298 (six bottle) cases
VINEYARD: Saddle Vineyard		ALCOHOL: 14.4%	pH: 3.53
BLEND: 41% Chardonnay, 26% Roussanne, 24% Marsanne, 9% Viognier		BOTTLED: August 12, 2002	RELEASED: March 15, 2003