



AMERICA'S GRAND WINE ESTATE

Rubicon Estate



2005 RC RESERVE SYRAH

HISTORY

Inspired by the great Australian heavyweights of Barossa and McLaren Vale as well as by the more filigreed Syrah-based wines from the Northern Rhone Valley, Roman Coppola and the Rubicon Estate winemaking team set out to create a unique Syrah that combined the nuance and texture of the Old World with the powerful fruit of the New World. The classic temperate climate of Rutherford, with its alluvial soil and eastern exposure, offers envious conditions for producing a Syrah with great concentration and personality, but also with more complexity.

Roman Coppola designed the label for RC Reserve Syrah, selecting bold typeface and simple artwork to parallel the pure character and intense flavor of the bottle's contents.

THE VINEYARDS

Although Rubicon Estate resides in the heart of Cabernet country, portions of the property are extremely well suited to other red grape varieties, such as Syrah. In 1996, Syrah clones #1 and #7 from the Barossa Field Station were planted in the loamy soil of the Gate Vineyard. More recently, we planted another 5.5-acre parcel on Pritchett Hill with clones #2, #4 and #6. Both fruit sources demonstrate ripe, clearly defined Syrah flavors.

ORGANIC FARMING

Rubicon Estate is farmed organically out of respect for the environment and our vineyard staff, as well as our belief that organic grapes make better wine. Our vineyards are certified organic by California Certified Organic Farmers (www.ccof.org).

THE VINTAGE

The 2005 season in Rutherford was unlike the dry and early vintage before. After an early bud break, temperatures were lower than average for early spring and more frequent rainfall than usual continued until July, causing a larger than anticipated berry size and potential yield. Our vineyard team was very diligent in removing more clusters than usual so that our harvest was right on target. Our vigilance with respect to the vineyard paid off. The rest of the summer remained cooler than usual, in fact the early part of September was downright chilly. The low yields we planned for in the early part of summer allowed our fruit to ripen well and benefit from the relatively long hang time it enjoyed due to the cooler weather. Surprisingly, Syrah can acquire a density and depth of flavor in these conditions and the resulting RC is a brilliant example of this phenomenon.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

This was the second year that we experimented with whole cluster fermentation of Syrah fruit. Whole cluster fermentation of some lots brought out a greater aromatic complexity in the wine-- with smoky and roasted game scents, ash and lavender, plum and tobacco--as well as greater finesse of texture. The result in a year like this is a monumental wine.

Our winemaking for RC Reserve reflects our respect for the special terroir of our estate, long famous for producing excellent Cabernet and Zinfandel. This vintage shows yet another aspect of our terroir in being eminently suitable for Syrah, another element that we look forward to exploring in the future.

TASTING NOTES

The 2005 RC Reserve Syrah has a distinctive aroma of ripe berry pie, plum, lavender, vanilla, coconut and tobacco. On the palate, sweet ripe flavors of blackberries, blueberries and plum are framed in a densely yet luxuriously tannic structure. The wine is powerful, dense, heady and ripe yet maintaining a balance and nuanced complexity that emerges gradually as the wine opens up.

APPELLATION:	RUTHERFORD, CA
BLEND:	95% SYRAH, 4% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 1% PETITE SIRAH
VINEYARD:	GATE, CHATEAU, SMALL BLOCK VINEYARDS
BARREL REGIMEN:	25 MONTHS FRENCH AND AMERICAN OAK BARRELS
CASE PRODUCTION:	282 9L CASES PRODUCED
ACID:	.59/100ML
PH:	3.78
ALCOHOL:	14.6%
RELEASED:	APRIL 2008


Scott McLeod ~ Winemaker