



Rubicon is the flagship wine of the Niebaum-Coppola Estate. It reflects the singular *terroir* of this world-renowned property. Rubicon captures the heritage of Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon and is made from 100% organically farmed grapes. It comes only from vineyards owned by Niebaum-Coppola Estate Winery in western Rutherford.

The heart of Rubicon has always been Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet was planted on this Estate sometime between 1882 and 1885 by Inglenook founder, Captain Gustave Niebaum. Cuttings propagated from those original vines and planted on other parts of the property survived over more than a century. In 1989, Foundation Plant Sciences and the University of California at Davis collected cuttings from the Estate for research and cataloging. Laboratory analysis, coupled with oral vineyard sourcing records from Estate Historian and then Vineyard Manager, Rafael Rodriguez, proved that genetic material from these cuttings was the same as in the vines Niebaum brought back from France in the 1880s. They were unique to the Niebaum-Coppola Estate and because this clone has been continuously planted here, it is one of California's most historic and important clones of Cabernet Sauvignon. After identifying the clone, UC Davis worked with the plant material to create a selection that was disease-resistant and suitable for use in today's vineyards. That clone has now been registered as Clone #29—the Niebaum Clone.

## Vineyard Notes

The 1999 Rubicon reflects three generations of Cabernet Sauvignon planted on the Estate. As with all Rubicon, its essence is derived from the Garden Vineyard. This original head-pruned, non-irrigated vineyard was first planted to St. George rootstock with Niebaum Clone Cabernet Sauvignon in 1965—these are the oldest vines on the property. Named for its location adjacent to the beautiful gardens of the Niebaum home, this vineyard produces small yields of intense, small-berried Cabernet Sauvignon fruit. Garden is the cornerstone of Rubicon and was the vineyard block from which UC Davis selected the cuttings for the research on Clone #29. In 1988, the Gio Vineyard was planted to the Niebaum Clone. Located in the heart of the Estate, this Vineyard receives

full sun, with a shady late afternoon reprieve from Mt. St. John to the west. Its fruit is forward, ripe and fleshy. Other Cabernet grapes come from the Cask Vineyard, which like the Garden Vineyard, is full of history. As a source of the original Niebaum Clone plant material, this vineyard was used to bud the Garden Vineyard to the Niebaum Clone in 1965.

## Vintage Notes

The 1999 vintage in the Napa Valley was magnificent. Unlike the cooler vintages of 1991, 1993, and 1998, the growing season in 1999 was warm, dry, and very sunny. Late in the summer, the San Francisco fog slowed the season down by cooling morning temperatures and shading the vines. However, by September, harvest was in full swing and lasted well into October. The fruit produced from the 1999 vintage is a welcome return to a typical Napa Valley harvest.

## Winemaker's Notes

When Cabernet is truly ripe on this Estate, we expect aromas and flavors of violets and dark sour cherries. That is what makes Rubicon taste like Rubicon. In 1999 virtually all of the established Cabernet blocks reached this critical level of maturation. The wine is virtually opaque yet still vibrant with a reddish/purple hue. The aromas are pure sour cherry, red licorice and exotic spices. The palate is as dense as it is luscious with dark fruits of black cherry and plum and dark berry jam. Though not apparent, the wine was aged in 90% new French oak for 26 months. To me, when wine has that much oak and doesn't show it, it's an indication of a very dense and well-integrated wine. The addition of Merlot and Cabernet Franc increases the range of flavors and develops the rich blueberry and red fruits along with the delicious black cherry cola. The 1999 Rubicon is a powerful wine and will satisfy the most discriminating palate now, yet is suitable for extended cellaring.

Scott McLeod, Winemaker

APPELLATION: Rutherford, Niebaum-Coppola Estate	BARREL REGIMEN: 26 months in 90% New French Oak	TOTAL ACID: .56	CASE PRODUCTION: 5700 (six bottle) cases
VINEYARD: Garden, Gio, Cask	ALCOHOL: 14.4%	pH: 3.73	RELEASED: March 15, 2003
BLEND: 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Merlot, 3% Cabernet Franc			BOTTLED: March 2002