

# INGLENOOK



JANUARY 2020



I was born on a small ranch in Jalisco, Mexico in 1943. I was one of five children, and I started working when I was 12 years old, because that's what we had to do to support our family. I had to drop out of school when I was quite young, but I'm educated in another way, maybe not from school, but I believe I've gotten a good education from life.

My father would work off and on in the U.S., he was a bracero (guest worker) in Arizona and Texas, and later he came to California. He'd work eight months here and four months he'd go back to Mexico and that's when we'd see him.



When I was 20, my father took me with him to California. California was another world to me, very different. I met new people, new ways of living. I liked it, and I said, "I'm going to stay here." I had a local passport, and in those years, if you wanted to work, you could come and go without too much trouble. I worked in Los Angeles for a while and eventually went to Sacramento, where I met my wife Maria. She had been born in Mexico but became a legal resident when she was 15. When my wife was pregnant, the border patrol grabbed me. Because my wife was very advanced in her pregnancy, they gave me a month to leave voluntarily, and

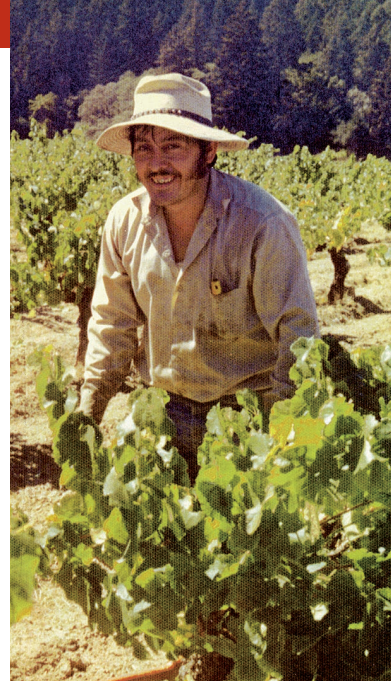
after my daughter was born, we went back to Mexico. I went through the process to get papers, and I got U.S. residency. My brother-in-law told me, "Come to Napa, there's a lot of work here," so we came to Napa Valley in 1970.

My first job in Napa was at Robert Mondavi Winery, and I worked in production. During harvesting, I'd wash and scoop the grapes from the tanks, and I did different jobs like that. Then I heard about a company that was looking for vineyard laborers. The company was called Oakville Vineyard, and they managed a property at the end of Niebaum Lane in Rutherford. This was before Mr. Coppola bought it.

I had never done vineyard work before. It was hard because there were selfish people who didn't want to teach you. I met an Italian who was told to instruct me, but when he was pruning and I asked him to show me how he did it, he turned away so I wouldn't see how he pruned. The first day I did pruning, the next day I couldn't move my hand, it was completely swollen. You have to know how to handle the shears, it's not easy. But little by little, I learned. I did everything they asked – I've always liked to fulfill my obligations – and then I was offered a permanent job, and a small house on the property for my family to live in. Our first night in the house was February 14, 1972. We slept on the floor. We had a sheet, a blanket, and my little daughter between my wife and me to warm her because it was so cold.

Then, thank God – Mr. Coppola came, he bought the property and I was included in the package. I started as a

simple laborer, and eventually I became the vineyard foreman, supervising the workers doing all of the various activities – preparing the soil, planting, pruning, harvesting, etc. During the harvest, we'd add more workers, migrants. In the 1970s and early 1980s, there wasn't a lot of restriction or enforcement of immigrant labor. They'd either get paid by the hour or by the ton. The hourly wage was \$4.50. A good picker could pick 1 1/2 tons a day and get \$45/ton.



I became a citizen in 1994. I went to the ceremony at the Napa courthouse. There were many Latinos in the Valley who were also becoming citizens at that time. When I took the oath, it was a very important and proud moment for me.

During my 48 years at Inglenook I have seen many changes in vineyard work. We have battery-powered pruning shears now, although of course you still have to know where to cut – there's an art to it. We used to water the vines with a 1,000 gallon tank truck, and now there are many wells and irrigation systems. We used to put the grapes on trays and the trays were emptied into gondolas. A lot of grapes would get damaged or burst that way. Now, we do it much more carefully. We load the grapes in boxes so the juice doesn't spill until the grapes reach the crusher. It's much better for the quality of the wine. And of course the wages have risen. We found that it's better to pay pickers an hourly wage rather than by tonnage, so they don't rush and will take more care with the grapes.

Another change is that now there are many women working in the vineyards, due to the shortage of men laborers. But it's tough for the women, it's a very hard job, working in the fields. Our children don't want to work in the vineyards, they have other goals, which is to be expected. But someone has to pick the grapes.

I have done a lot of work in my life, but in no job have I spent as long as I have here, this is the place where I feel at home. Once, my supervisor told me, "You know? If you want to leave, Mr. Coppola says that those who want to, can leave, but those who want to stay here can continue. Do you want to leave or do you want to stay?" I said, "No, I'm staying here until they carry me out."





## 2013 RUBICON

### HISTORY

In 1975, Francis Ford Coppola purchased the historic Inglenook property, intent on restoring the estate’s legacy of creating world-class wines equal to those that founder Gustave Niebaum and his grandnephew John Daniel Jr. made for decades. Rubicon, the estate’s premier wine since 1978, is produced from the best estate grown fruit, including the historic Gustave Niebaum Cabernet Sauvignon selection, which was first planted on the property in the 1880s.

### VINTAGE

Although it was one of the driest growing seasons on record, 2013 was a stellar vintage in large part because the vines were optimized by the ideal conditions of the previous year. The growing season produced a large crop, so the vines had to be thinned on multiple occasions, but these efforts paid off. The resulting fruit was highly expressive, well concentrated, and ideally balanced. Rubicon typically contains small percentages of other Bordeaux varietals, but because the Cabernet Sauvignon was so exceptional this vintage we felt it should stand on its own as a pure varietal.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

Over the last few years, we’ve refined our winemaking methods, using smaller boxes for picking, a new destemmer that is gentler on the fruit, and we apply greater scrutiny during the fermentation process by evaluating individual blocks of fruit daily to determine which will benefit from pump overs. Also, this vintage, we implemented by-the-hour pay for our pickers rather than by-the-ton, as an additional quality measure that encourages our vineyard staff to pick more slowly, be gentler with the fruit, and focus on selecting higher quality clusters as a means of pre-sorting. Because these methods greatly enhance the quality of the wine, it is our goal to continue this technique with all future vintages.

### TASTING NOTES

Highly expressive with extraordinary quality and character, our 2013 Rubicon offers upfront aromas of cherries, black currants, and dark chocolate with substantial presence of oak, toast, and floral notes that continue evolving as the wine opens up. A dense, voluminous palate imbued with very fine tannins showcases flavors of dark crushed berries, cassis, and smoky wood. As the flavors gradually broaden, nuances of tobacco leaves and spices emerge. There is a precision and elegance to this vintage, which finishes with freshness due to the balanced natural acidity. Expect beautiful development as this wine matures.



APPELLATION:	RUTHERFORD, NAPA VALLEY
BLEND:	100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON
VINEYARDS:	WALNUT, COHN, APPLE, CREEK, GIO, GARDEN
ALCOHOL:	13.8%
BARREL REGIME:	18 MONTHS 100% FRENCH OAK 75% NEW OAK
BOTTLED:	MAY 2015





## 2016 BLANCANEAUX

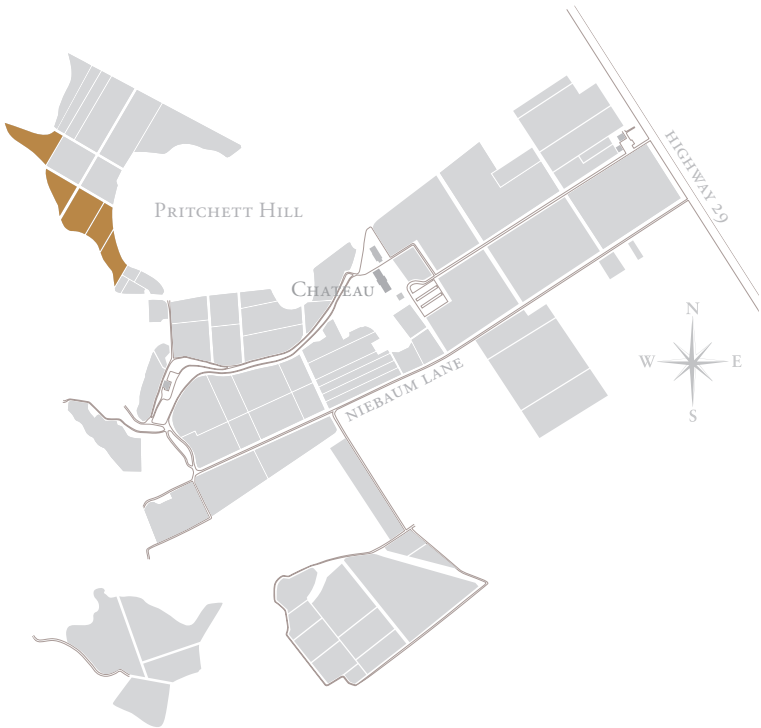
*Produced since 1999 as a partner to Rubicon, Inglenook’s premier red wine, Blancaneaux is a blend of three estate-grown white Rhône varieties. The Marsanne and Roussanne contribute body and minerality, while the Viognier adds intense aromas of tropical fruits. These varieties are grown in vineyard blocks that enjoy full morning sun but are in the cooling shadow of Mount St. John by mid-afternoon.*

### VINTAGE NOTES

A winter with average rainfall followed four years of drought, providing ample soil moisture to kick off the 2016 growing season. Early spring was warm, triggering rapid, healthy canopy growth. Late-spring temperatures and limited rainfall reduced the risk of frost during mid-May bloom, ensuring standard yields. June closed with warmer temperatures, slowing vine canopy growth at the ideal time. Cool August weather helped the fruit retain the freshness valued in this wine. The Blancaneaux harvest began with Viognier on August 29th, followed by Marsanne, and finished with Roussanne on September 9th.

### WINEMAKER’S TASTING NOTES

Vivid and elegant with a fresh spray of minerals, 2016 Blancaneaux offers an evocative bouquet reminiscent of white flowers, honeysuckle, Asian pears, and grapefruit zest. Complex and full-bodied, the subtle creaminess on the palate results from a touch of French oak. Its layered structure is well complemented by a lingering finish and vivacious flavors of white peach, citrus, and vanilla.



APPELLATION:	RUTHERFORD, NAPA VALLEY
BLEND:	36% VIOGNIER, 32% MARSANNE, 32% ROUSSANNE
VINEYARDS:	APPLE, SADDLE
ALCOHOL:	13.5%
BARREL REGIME:	7 MONTHS 79% STAINLESS STEEL 21% FRENCH OAK
BOTTLED:	MAY 2017





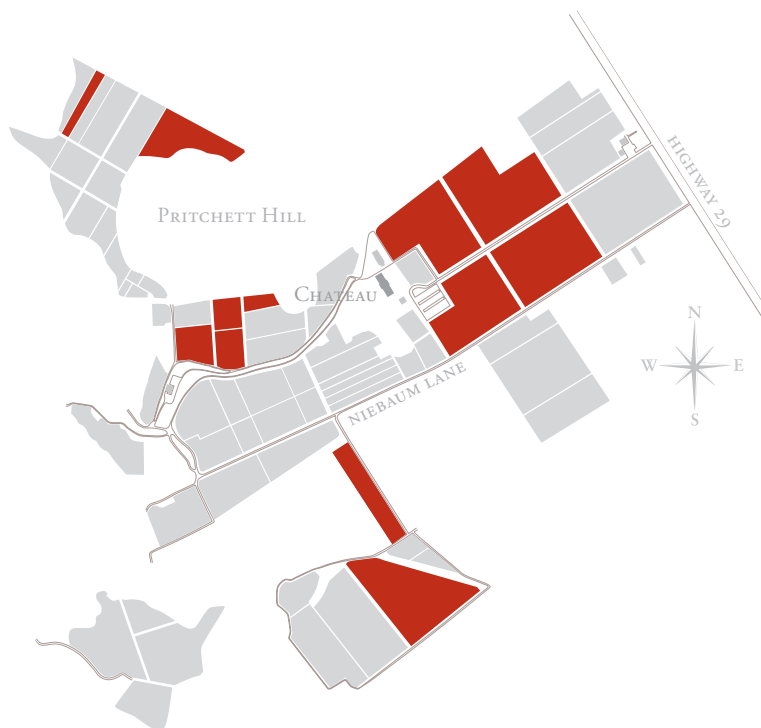
## 2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

### VINTAGE NOTES

In 1995, The Coppola Family reunited the historic Inglenook property, creating a Cabernet Sauvignon that epitomized the legacy of the estate. Now, Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon continues to be a tribute to the historic world-renowned Inglenook 1941 Cabernet Sauvignon. The 1941 vintage was produced by John Daniel Jr. from vines brought to the Inglenook Estate from Bordeaux by the Founder Gustave Niebaum. Today, this estate-grown wine is blended with the best lots of Cabernet Sauvignon that remain after the highly selective blending of Rubicon.

### WINEMAKER’S TASTING NOTES

The 2014 vintage of Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon reflects a very pure composition that contains only small amounts of Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and just a touch of Merlot. From this outstanding year emerges a smooth, generous palate with very fine dusty tannins and exemplary balance. As weighty and voluptuous as its predecessor, the flavors and fragrance of this vintage lean more heavily toward black fruits and seasoned wood. Cassis, blackberries, plums, and black currants provide juicy, mouthfilling flavors while distinct notes of cigar box, oak, graphite, and earthy spices create aromatic accents that are bound to evolve and become even more intense with bottle age. Yet, impressive density and texture already create ample allure.



APPELLATION:	RUTHERFORD, NAPA VALLEY
BLEND:	93% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 3% CABERNET FRANC, 3% PETIT VERDOT, 1% MERLOT
VINEYARDS:	CHATEAU, COHN, CREEK, SMALL BLOCK, WALNUT
ALCOHOL:	14.2%
BARREL REGIME:	18 MONTHS IN 100% FRENCH OAK, 50% NEW OAK
BOTTLED:	MAY 2016





## AS ESSENTIAL AS GRAPES: NAPA VALLEY'S VINEYARD WORKERS

California's history of labor relations within its wine industry starts, naturally enough, with the flourishing of that industry in the mid-19th century, just around the same time the California Republic became part of the Union in 1850. From then on, the protracted story of California's agricultural workers assumes a repetitive pattern: different waves of newcomers repeatedly migrated to the state – typically from impoverished regions of the world – for job opportunities, better living conditions, and peace of mind, and then moved elsewhere more often than not because of the prejudices of public opinion, which impacted state and federal immigration laws. The first such foreigners to enter California's viticultural labor force were the Chinese.

Chinese workers, mostly from the port city of Canton (now known as Guangzhou), came to California during the 1850s to escape the domestic and economic chaos of their own country. The lure of the state's Gold Rush brought them in droves, but for the majority who were unsuccessful in that pursuit, the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad offered other work opportunities. Some Chinese remained in San Francisco and found jobs in the city's cigar and shoe factories while others moved into agricultural work in the northern part of the state, especially after the completion

of the railroad in 1869. A little over a decade later, Chinese workers accounted for one-third of the total seasonal farm labor supply in Napa and Sonoma counties. In fact, after purchasing Inglenook in 1880, Captain Gustave Niebaum employed many Chinese along with local residents for construction projects on the Estate as well as vineyard work, and many of the vicinity's new winery owners did the same.

Despite their reliable work ethic and availability, growing anti-Chinese sentiment among California's

white citizens culminated in 1882 when Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, the first law that barred an entire ethnic group from immigrating to American soil. The Act was repealed in 1943 when China became an ally of the United States against Japan in World War II.

Following Chinese exclusion, increasing numbers of immigrants from all over Europe – Italians, Germans, and Swiss among them – arrived in America. Although many remained on the east coast, it wasn't long before those headed west quickly filled the viticultural work gap in northern California. The majority began as unskilled laborers and initially found assimilation difficult, but soon tapped into a perhaps ingrained relationship with vineyards and wineries, leaving an indelible mark on the region's wine industry. There were others who arrived earlier with specific goals in regard to winemaking such as Charles Krug and the Beringer Brothers from Germany, the Hungarian Agoston Haraszthy, and Captain Niebaum, himself an immigrant from Finland.

After California's devastating phylloxera epidemic in the 1870s, Prohibition dealt the state's wine industry its next catastrophic blow. The Volstead Act was passed in 1919 and repealed in 1933, just as the effects of the Dust Bowl era were beginning to take a toll on America's economy, which had only begun to recover from the 1929 stock market crash. Over three million destitute farmers from the Great Plains region abandoned what was left of their homes and headed to California in search of basic sustenance. Unfortunately, many were turned away at its borders, and those who did find jobs were frequently unable to support themselves because of a significant reduction in the wage rate.

America's entry into World War II caused a surge in the country's economy, but led to a shortage of labor while the war was being waged. In response to California's need for farm workers, the United States signed an agreement with





the Mexican government called the Bracero Program – bracero, or “one who works using his arms,” being derived from the Spanish word *brazo* for “arm” – to contract Mexican nationals to work as agricultural laborers in the States. The Bracero Program began in 1942 and though it ended in 1964, it proved to be a catalyst for increased immigration from Mexico in the decades that followed. Rife with controversy from the start, the Program’s good intentions to provide bilateral opportunities to both countries quickly transformed into apathy at best and, at worst, exploitation with policies often being short-circuited by employers and Mexican workers not always being given the wages and benefits they were promised.

During this time, Inglenook, under the purview of John Daniel Jr., employed one year-round bracero and around 25 braceros at the height of harvest season along with a diversity of other ethnic groups for vineyard work—Portuguese, Italians, Germans, and African-Americans – but stopped participating in the Bracero Program in 1948, a few years after the war had ended. Today, the majority of Inglenook’s vineyard workers are of Mexican descent and are hired directly by the winery regardless of year-round or seasonal status.

The United Farm Workers union was co-founded by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in 1962 as a direct response to the injustices of the Bracero Program that they themselves had experienced first-hand. With its slogan of *Sí, se puede*, or “Yes, you can,” the UFW was hugely successful in the southern part of the state and in the Central Valley, but was unable to obtain a foothold in Napa Valley. Conditions were always better in the Valley because the tight-knit community and smaller landholdings contributed to closer, more loyal relationships between winery owners and workers with the former showing genuine concern about the well-being of their employees whether year-round or seasonal. Their sincerity materialized when the Valley’s vintners established the Growers Foundation in 1972, which offered vineyard workers a much better benefits package than the UFW that included increased wages, pension plans, health insurance, vacation time, and bonuses. Additionally, Napa Valley had more diversity among its vineyard labor force and wasn’t impacted by the intense influx of Mexican migrant workers that occurred in the vast acreage of the Central Valley. These circumstances didn’t necessarily mitigate all discrimination in Napa Valley, but the area was regarded

as being a far more desirable place to work given the greater harmony between wine producers and their labor force.



Members of the Inglenook harvest crew, 2007

When the famous “Judgment of Paris” was held in 1976, and two Napa Valley wines bested their French counterparts in a blind tasting comparison, the Valley started to earn recognition as one of the world’s premier winegrowing regions. Such acclaim led to a steady expansion of vineyard acreage along with the obvious need to employ more and more vineyard workers. The Bracero Program had long since ended, but it paved the way for large-scale legal and illegal migration from Mexico to the United States partially because the Mexican government no longer had the incentive to manage its surplus labor and, to a greater extent, because word-of-mouth networks had been formed during the 1940s into the early 1960s that forged strong, lasting links between rural Mexican villages and the availability of agricultural jobs in California.

Although the Bracero Program helped to create well-worn paths between Mexico and northern California, many descendants of braceros opted to set down roots and now represent a new generation of winemakers in Napa and Sonoma counties. There are a host of wineries – among them Robledo Winery, Valdez Family Winery, and Mi Sueño Winery – which grew out of the Bracero Program.

While Napa Valley’s reputation as an internationally renowned wine region is vigorous, the future of the entire state’s vineyard labor force is paradoxically tenuous because of the dwindling numbers of prospective workers. Various factors contribute to this critical issue, the first being immigration policy which has always been a wild card in shaping the agricultural labor market. The second is an aging workforce and less interest from the younger generations to take on the rigorous tasks that vineyard work demands.

For some wineries mechanization is already here, for others it looms on the horizon as a potentially feasible solution to the shrinking labor pool, but one that, on a grand scale, will require a paradigm shift in the traditional methods by which vineyards are managed. Winegrowers are, understandably, resistant to mechanization for practical reasons – some of the smaller wineries, for instance, simply weren’t designed to accommodate large, robotic vehicles – and for the reality of needing a human presence with the sensory expertise, gained through years of experience, to “feel the vine.” The future likelihood of mechanized vineyard management begs a basic question of how much automation will affect *terroir*, which is absolutely organic in spirit, its full expression in wine being dependent on the intuitive and responsive hands of vineyard workers who are becoming ever more valuable with each passing year.

Photos, from left: Vineyard workers including Chinese men, in the 1800s; Inglenook’s labourers, circa 1893; Dolores Huerta, top; Cesar Chavez.

