



The Nine North Wine Company is a portfolio of small lot wines from California's Napa Valley, North Coast, Central Coast and Lodi viticultural appellations.

Proprietor-négociants, Chris Nickolopoulos and Elijah Pfister work with a handful of California's most respected grape growers and wineries selecting the finest rows, plots, barrels, and lots from each vintage. They strive to blend these selections into finished wines which carefully balance ripeness and acidity to achieve both regional typicity and unique, expressive flavor profiles.



This is a story of two friends who started a wine company over many barbecues and countless bottles of wine. As their wives had been roommates in college and best friends since, Chris Nickolopoulos and Elijah Pfister had known each other for over decade. As Chris was in the wine trade and Elijah's beloved uncle owned one of largest wine and liquor retailers in North America, the conversations inevitably gravitated towards wine.

Wine and fine cuisine had always been part of Chris's life. He grew up in a Midwestern restaurant family and all of his closest friends spent their youth, summers, and college years toiling away in kitchens and dining rooms. Some were great four-star establishments, some were absolute dives, but they all became serious and passionate about food and wine at an early age.

What some saw as a means to an end to get through college, Chris viewed as a serious career path. In 1990, he and his best friend moved into a noisy little apartment next to the Addison "El" tracks in Chicago's Wrigleyville so that they could immerse themselves in Chicago's developing culinary scene. Chris went to work tending bar at the swanky Spiaggia, which then led to various management roles in the wine trade that culminated in leading the fine wine division of a noted Chicago distributor. During this time, he formed close friendships with many winemakers and growers which would prove to be useful later on. In 2001 he was chosen to lead a respected international fine wine sales organization which required him to move to San Francisco. Chris spent the following five years traversing the globe, tasting great wines and building several of the most respected wine brands in the US today.

Elijah Pfister grew up climbing oak trees on his parents' farm in Northern California where at an early age he learned to garden, hunt and developed an affinity for the agrarian lifestyle. When his family moved to the Bay Area, he looked to neighboring Sonoma and Napa to fulfill his rural

yearnings, and gained an appreciation for viticulture and winemaking which was enhanced when his fine wine retailer uncle, "J," came to visit bearing bottles of wine to explore.

Young Elijah was influenced by his family's embrace of enterprise. One winter his mother, an accomplished home baker, decided to establish a wholesale cake business and his brothers and sisters were conscripted to help in the kitchen. It was excellent experience in starting a business from the ground up. While in his teens, Elijah still dreamed of farming but his uncle J guided him into pursuing an education first and then deciding on his life's direction.

While obtaining his MBA from Stanford, Elijah knew that he wanted to be involved in the wine trade but did not want to take the route taken by many of his MBA brethren; stuck in a corporate office 3,000 miles away from the action. He wanted to be in the middle of it.

Since 2006, Chris had been working as the US marketing agent for three international producers. In January 2009, he founded importer Maritime Wine Trading Collective with Elijah as its CFO.

That summer, Chris and Elijah were approached by a high-end winemaker friend who had some extra Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon: could they do anything with it? Samples were sent and both were greatly impressed with the quality. Moreover, given the recession at the time, it was available for pennies on the dollar. They took it all. Desiring a fruitier character in the finished wine, they also purchased several lots of Merlot and spent two weeks experimenting with blends until they hit the sweet spot. They branded the wine *Ministry of the Vinterior* (MOV) and the 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon was their first négociant wine.

While the gents were blending Chardonnay, Zinfandel and Pinot Noir for their MOV line, word quickly spread among winemaking estates that there was a discreet home to be found for the glut of wine that was in the market, and hundreds of samples came their way. Concurrently, retailers seeking proprietary blends learned of their efforts and they began to fulfill requests for them. It was an excellent business model in that stellar juice was obtained for a fraction of the cost and the consumer received appellation-specific wines that over-delivered at the price point.

In early 2012, Chris was approached by close friends who owned Nine North Wine Company. Established in 2001, Nine North released wines that were second labels of two high-end Napa Valley Estates. Chris and Elijah recognized the opportunity to significantly grow their négociant business with an established brand and the sale was completed in December.

As a standard practice, they do not disclose their grower/winery relations. In doing so they are assured of ongoing access to what are, in many instances, very well-known and established vineyard/winery sources who would otherwise not work with them out of concern for maintaining high price points for their own branded wines.

Today, Chris and Elijah continue to have exclusive access to top notch California wineries and vineyard plots and release appellation-specific Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, and red and white field blends under eight brands.

CHASING LIONS

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

I grew up in a multi generational farming family. In 1974 at the age of five, I began to follow my grandfather every day on the family farm as he tended to his ranch. Over the years he taught me a lot about farming but more importantly about life. Then one day in my late teens, he told me it was time to get of the ranch and “go chase lions.”

I never asked him what he meant by that, because something inside me already knew. It’s been over 20 years now since he passed and I have been chasing lions ever since.

For this unique blend, Chris and Elijah have been sourcing cabernet and merlot from the same vineyard sites for the last three years . When they first found the lot of Cabernet they thought, “Wow – that’s really good Cab from the central valley!” But they both felt it needed a little something to knock the dust off the fruit. They found a lot of Merlot (from Monterey County no less!), and blended in just a small percent. When they put their noses in the glasses, they knew they had a winner.

The 2015 Chasing Lions Cabernet Sauvignon is bright with ripe red cherries leaping out of the glass, complementing aromas of boysenberry and spicy red plum in the mouth. This juicy and inviting wine shows flavors of milk chocolate, sweet red berries and a slight oaky smokiness, all harmoniously blended in a matrix of soft and supple tannins. The delicate vanilla finish lingers long after the last sip is gone.

Enjoy this crowd-pleasing wine with grilled hanger steak, burgers and grilled red meats.

Technical information

Vintage: 2015

Appellation: California

Vineyard Locations: Monterrey and Lodi

Blend: 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot

ALC 13.9%

TA .47/100mL

RS .42/100mL

PH 3.9

Appellation information



Monterey Appellation: The northern portion is a cool growing region, but one with a very long growing season. Daytime temperatures rarely exceed 75 °F in most parts of the region, although the southern part of the Monterey AVA occasionally reaches 100 degrees. The soil is sandy and most regions require extensive irrigation from the Salinas River.

Lodi Appellation: Lodi has a Mediterranean climate with warm days and cool nights. The soil, unlike many other appellations, varies within the AVA, though in most places it is a deep loam that occasionally is covered with large rocks, like the French region of Chateauneuf du Pape





HULLABALOO



Webster's Dictionary (The Voice of Authority) defines Hullabaloo as: To cause an uproar or fuss, and we are certain that this wine is positioned to do just that! Taking advantage of some strong "old timer" grower relations, we have been able to source some wonderful old vine Zinfandel from several Central Valley vineyards. Please don't ask us from where, as we have been sworn to secrecy; just know the same grapes go into wines that retail for three to four times the price.

Since people always ask us about our interesting labels here is a little bit about Hullabaloo: We chose the classic 19th century strongman icon as we thought it was fitting of the period between 1850 and 1900 (around the same time Zinfandel was planted and began to flourish in California). The strongman was not only an exhibitor of feats of strength but his main purpose was also to showcase his great size, boldness and symmetry - kind of describes old vine Zinfandel doesn't it?

With this wine, Chris and Elijah were aiming for one that you can enjoy on a patio with a great burger or steak. Not a flabby or syrupy Zin you'll find from other producers; this wine has bright fruit and will continue to age gracefully for the next 5 - 7 years.

Technical Information

Vintage:	2014
Variety:	100% Zinfandel
Appellation:	California (Lodi, Mokelumne River)
Aging:	Six months in American oak.
Alcohol:	13.9%
pH:	3.97
TA:	4.7 g/L

Appellation information



Lodi Appellation: Lodi has a Mediterranean climate with warm days and cool nights. The soil, unlike many other appellations, varies within the AVA, though in most places it is a deep loam that occasionally is covered with large rocks, like the French region of Chateaufort du Pape.

Mokelumne River Appellation: The AVA is named after the Mokelumne River, which drains out of the Sierra Nevada Mountains into the San Joaquin River and passes through the heart of the appellation. The wine region includes a portion of the lower Mokelumne River and the Cosumnes River, a tributary. The soil in the area is alluvial fan deposits of sand and loam. Ample rainfall and soil moisture retention allows most grape growers to farm without the use of irrigation.





Parcel 41 Cabernet Sauvignon 2013

The name Parcel 41 is derived from the original agriculture land assessor's plot number for our ranch in Napa Valley, California.

Cabernet Sauvignon grapes are the kings of Napa Valley and the wines are often quite expensive. Our goal with Parcel 41 wines is to make Napa Valley wines that are supple and elegant, yet still have the structure, depth and richness you find in more expensive offerings.

This limited production Cabernet Sauvignon has rich, ripe black fruit flavors, a harmonious background of acidity and spice components with a silky texture a ripe tannins to round out this superbly balanced wine.

Technical information

Vintage: 2013

Appellation: 100% Napa Valley

Aging: 100% French Oak (30% new)

In barrel: 6 months

Alcohol: 13.8%

pH: 3.87

TA: 5.5 g/L

Appellation Information



The Napa Valley enjoys a dry Mediterranean climate which encompasses only 2% of the Earth's surface which translates to great consistency vintage-to-vintage. Within the Napa Valley AVA, there are several areas that possess distinct microclimates and terrain, imprinting recognizable characteristics on the grapes grown there.





Parcel 41 Merlot 2014

The name Parcel 41 is derived from the original agriculture land assessor's plot number for Nine North's ranch in Napa Valley, California.

Merlot grapes are typically more difficult to grow than Cabernet Sauvignon, which is why the best Merlots are often more expensive. Therefore the goal with Parcel 41 was to make a Merlot that is supple and elegant, yet still has the structure, depth and richness you find in more expensive offerings.

The Parcel 41 Merlot shines ruby red in the glass, with shimmering purple undertones. The nose is dark and alluring, with aromas of black currant, saddle leather, and milk chocolate, with a subtle and delicate floral note. The mouth is soft and substantial, with round, mouth-filling tannins layering smoothly with the densely packed flavors of chocolate-covered cherries, spicy black plum, and smoky espresso. This wine is a crowd pleaser and will pair well with a meal of pan roasted pork chops with thyme and currants, served with bacon-roasted Brussels sprouts and a wild rice pilaf.

Technical information

100% Merlot

Appellation: 100% Napa Valley

Aging: Eight months in new and once-used French oak barrels.

Alcohol: 15%

TA: 6.1 g/L

pH: 3.55

RS: 0.5 g/L

Appellation information



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ROCK & VINE

THREE RANCHES

2014 Rock & Vine Central Coast Cabernet Sauvignon

In 2007, we found incredible Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec coming from three different vineyards in Northern California and Rock & Vine was born. We've kept the tradition alive since then; sourcing juice from three distinct properties. For this vintage, the Cab came from Paso Robles and the Merlot and Malbec from vineyards in the Central Coast.

The 2014 Rock & Vine Cabernet Sauvignon shines a deep, vibrant ruby color in the glass. The nose is a lovely, layered blend of blueberry, creme de cassis, and sweet vanilla. The mouth is engaging from the first sip with a charming mix of candied cherry, ripe blueberries, root beer, and milk chocolate. The tannins are long and soft, and the lengthy finish shows sweet, toasty oak lingering in your mouth long after the sip is gone.

Enjoy this ace-in-the-hole Cabernet with your grandma's four cheese lasagna, or grilled pork sausages served with roasted sweet potatoes and a Caesar salad.

Technical information

Vintage: 2014

Varieties: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon 4% Merlot, 1% Malbec

Alcohol: 13.9%

pH: 3.80

TA: 5.6 g/L

Appellation information



Central Coast Appellation: This large AVA encompasses vineyards from San Francisco all the way to Santa Barbara. The overarching constant in this AVA is the influence of the Pacific Ocean.

Paso Robles Appellation: Paso Robles is centrally located between San Francisco and Los Angeles along California's Central Coast. With a greater day-to-night temperature swing than any other appellation in California, distinct microclimates, diverse soils and a long growing season, Paso Robles is a unique wine region blessed with optimal growing conditions.





ROCK & VINE

THREE RANCHES

2014 Rock & Vine Central Coast Chardonnay

The 2014 Rock & Vine Chardonnay is a light straw color in the glass, and immediately presents aromas of tangerine and white peach, with a subtle hint of rose hanging just above a light caramel. The mouth is bright and clean, with round, layered flavors of fresh Asian pear, juicy ripe orange, and wild flower honey.

A Chardonnay for those who prefer less oak and more fruit, the Rock & Vine 2014 Chardonnay will shine with a cheese plate with honey-drizzled chevre and a hard-rind nutty sheeps milk cheese, served with fig paste, candied nuts, and slices of fresh apple.

Technical information

Variety: 100% Chardonnay

Appellation: Central Coast

Fermented and aged in stainless steel tanks.

Alcohol: 14.6%

TA: 6.2 g/L

pH: 3.60

RS: 0.6 g/L

Appellation information



Central Coast Appellation: This large AVA encompasses vineyards from San Francisco all the way to Santa Barbara. The overarching constant in this AVA is the influence of the Pacific Ocean.



SEVEN SINNERS

As importers and négociants, we tend to hang around a lot of winemakers, viticulturists and of course tradespeople from all over the world. Some—if not most—can be a pretty rowdy bunch especially around harvest time after we’ve knocked off from a hard day’s work and cracked open a couple beers or opened a handle of gin.

In 2002, we knew we were going to make a Petite Sirah (it was actually already in the barrel), and with true Nine North predilection for whimsical names, we had to come up with one. If you’ve ever seen the film Seven Sinners (an old John Wayne classic from 1940’s also starring Marlene Dietrich), you’ll know Seven Sinners is a tongue in cheek reference to our wild bunch of friends and winemakers we’ve met along our travels. Here’s to all our friends in the trade: we’ll see you soon.

When Chris and Elijah first started making this wine, they noticed that California Petite Sirah is either very expensive or extremely cheap. They wanted to create something that was affordable but provided a more robust complement to food and fine dining and over-delivers on quality vintage after vintage.

This vintage shows velvety textures upfront followed by deep rich flavors of blackberry jam, blueberry and spice, resulting in a long, deep and concentrated finish.

While opulent, it has a food friendly balance. It’s showing beautifully right now and will continue to age gracefully for the next several years.

Technical information

Vintage:	2014
Composition:	100% Petite Sirah
Appellation:	California
Vineyard locations:	Central Valley (Lodi, Mokelumne River)
Alcohol:	13.9%

Appellation information



Lodi Appellation: Lodi has a Mediterranean climate with warm days and cool nights. The soil, unlike many other appellations, varies within the AVA, though in most places it is a deep loam that occasionally is covered with large rocks, like the French region of Chateauneuf du Pape.

Mokelumne River Appellation: The AVA is named after the Mokelumne River, which drains out of the Sierra Nevada Mountains into the San Joaquin River and passes through the heart of the appellation. The wine region includes a portion of the lower Mokelumne River and the Cosumnes River, a tributary. The soil in the area is alluvial fan deposits of sand and loam. Ample rainfall and soil moisture retention allows most grape growers to farm without the use of irrigation.



TWENTY BENCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2014

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With this 14th vintage of Twenty Bench, Chris and Elijah have created a wine with bold fruit balanced with mellow tannins and bright acidity.

The 2014 Twenty Bench Cabernet Sauvignon has a ripe black cherry core, twining with blackberry syrup, a subtle minerality, with the smokiness of charred French oak on the nose. The mouth is creamy and dense, with layered of juicy berries, the darkest of dark chocolates, rich espresso and black pepper. The wine is well-balanced and drinking well in its youth. You can enjoy this singular wine on its own or with grilled meats--especially burgers.

Technical information

Composition: 90% Cabernet, 7% Merlot, 3% Malbec.

Appellation: North Coast (Napa Valley & Sonoma).

Alcohol: 13.9%

pH: 3.91

TA: 5.4 g/L

Appellation information



Napa Valley Appellation: The Napa Valley enjoys a dry Mediterranean climate which encompasses only 2% of the Earth's surface which translates to great consistency vintage-to-vintage. Within the Napa Valley AVA, there are several areas that possess distinct microclimates and terrain, imprinting recognizable characteristics on the grapes grown there.

Sonoma Appellation: Sonoma has a variety of climate and soil conditions throughout. The difference in climate and soil means that cooler climate grapes grow well in certain regions and in others, warm climate grapes are more suitable.

