

PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

Amicus Cellars/X Winery could be the best-conceived small winery in Napa Valley, if not the entire state of California. Founded less than six years ago by owner/winemaker Reed Renaudin, 34, the winery has already grown to an impressive 15,000-case entity and seems easily capable of continued growth for the foreseeable future.

That's all fine and good with Renaudin, a San Diego native who admits to enjoying wine with his family when he turned 12-years-old.

"A number of my relatives lived close together and our family would have large Sunday dinners at my grandfather's house," he recently recalled. "Anyone who was twelve or older was allowed a glass of wine with the meal and I guess I really enjoyed it."

Renaudin entered UC Davis as an engineering student and quickly transferred to biology where he took a number of electives in viticulture, and where he admits he became hooked on the wine business. Upon graduating, Renaudin took a job with Gallo Sonoma in 1996 that sought to enhance the quality level of fruit produced under high stress conditions. He also worked with Heitz Cellars and then ventured to Western Australia for a position with Cape Clairault Wines of the Margaret River Region, about 4 hours south of Perth.

Returning to California in 1999, Renaudin was afforded the chance to earn double graduate degrees (an MBA and an MS in enology) from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo and was paid to do it through a research program. Part of his work involved a business plan for a startup winery that subsequently became the framework for Amicus Cellars/X Winery (shades of Southwest Airlines).

Amicus means *friend* in Latin, while X Winery is a story of its own making.

The X Generation? Almost, but no cigar.

It seems that Renaudin and a friend were trying to come up with a name for their new entity, and had narrowed their choices to five. Each time one was excluded a big X was put next to the name. At one point Renaudin saw all the X's and decided he'd hit on something special.

"The letter itself has a lot of strength," he

explained. "It is also easy to remember and cannot be misspelled." Needless to say, the name stuck and the business began. Amicus Cellars was designed to be the winery's reserve designator for its upper class wines.

The summer of 2003 saw the first 1700 cases of wine released to the public. Since then, X Winery/Amicus Cellars has grown to over 15,000 cases and will expand to around 25,000 in the next three years.

All of this is part of a carefully crafted business plan that has been closely followed by Reed Renaudin.

"From the beginning we have attempted to concentrate on established growers and established vineyards," Renaudin added. "We also have paid close attention to our cash flow and the storage aspects of our bulk wine. We decided against investing in a lot of equipment and instead were able to lease a bankrupt winery that more than fulfilled our needs.

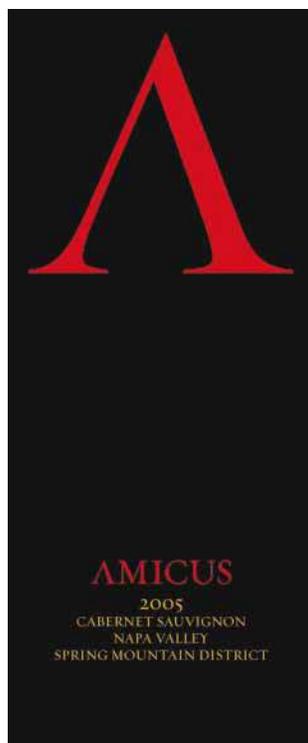
"More importantly, we have been able to stay in touch with the marketplace, particularly for the past year or so. We call this market dynamics and it gives us a great deal of flexibility."

What it could also be called is success, spelled with a capital "S." Take the Amicus Cellars releases, all made from selected vineyards on famed Spring Mountain. These wines generally sell out in three months and Renaudin would like to be able to produce more, but admits he has had trouble finding additional vineyards that meet his meticulous standards.

Renaudin also employs an unusual marketing strategy for the Amicus Cellars wines. Instead of using a selective private club basis or an allocation system that favors certain buyers, Reed Renaudin chooses to use a first come, first serve system that favors no one.

"That way," he finalized, "everyone has the same chance at our reserve tier of wines. I can't tell you how many people I've spoken to who have been perpetually shut out at small wineries who allocate their wines. I just thought it was the fairer way to handle things and it certainly has helped our sales to the utmost extent."

With such a well-conceived business plan to draw from, X Winery/Amicus Cellars is atypical of the many small wineries to sometimes struggle to get their product placed on the national scene.



The road to great wine begins at your door.

TASTING NOTES





Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

When the invitation came to supply Gold Medal Wine Club's *Platinum Series* members with wine, we were excited to show off our wines to their wine knowledgeable members. Our passion and commitment as a winery is to build on what our predecessors (over the last 4000 years) have accomplished, and provide wines in underserved segments. Our company is focused on innovation, efficiency, service, and imagination and we have a deep desire to satisfy wine lovers from the world over. Our goal is to please, spark conversation, and to bring reward to all that find our wines.

With this selection for the *Platinum Series* we hope that we have fulfilled your wishes to enjoy a classic wine that shows off the strengths of our winery in the heart of traditional Napa Valley quality.

Amicus wines are very limited in production and represent the best barrels from beautifully farmed vineyards in the Spring Mountain District of the Napa Valley. This mountain appellation is defined by its rugged terrain and small terraced vineyards. Extending from 400 feet to 1450 feet above sea level, the vineyard sites follow hillside contours and use vertical goblet trellising. To improve yield and quality, meter by meter spacing is used and vineyards are skillfully hand picked during harvest.

Each year, the winemaking begins with carefully planned viticulture practices in our vineyards. The goal is to achieve a small berry size so the skin to juice ratio remains high. This leads to wines that have more flavors and are richly extracted.

In the winery, we carefully sort and gently crush these grapes into a wide range of fermenters. Carefully selected French oak barrels from the Never, Allier and Limousin forests are used to age the wines for over 30 months, depending on the vintage and barrel selection. Our vision is to make a wine that is approachable upon release, but will continue to improve with moderate aging and has the longevity of the greatest wines of the world.

Enjoy a bottle tonight with friends!

Sincerely,

Reed Renaudin
Winemaker & CEO

TASTING NOTES

224 Cases Produced

Amicus Cellars' 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon was produced from the mountain appellation of Napa Valley's Spring Mountain District at an elevation of 1400 feet. Defined by its rugged terrain and small terraced vineyards, the site is known for developing grapes with good maturity and flavors that result in wines with elegance and balance. The 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon was awarded **91 Points** by *Robert Parker*: "Another superb value is the 2005 Amicus Cabernet Sauvignon Spring Mountain. Aromas of blueberries, black currants, spring flowers, and background subtle wood are followed by a layered, rich, medium to full-bodied Cabernet with sweet tannins and surprising concentration and length." Also named one of the **50 Great Wines of 2008** by Fredric Koepfel of the award-winning online wine blog *Bigger Than Your Head.com*, the Amicus Cabernet is an excellent representation in the use of premium terroir and innovative winemaking. Try pairing this award winning wine with barbequed steaks and beef roasts. Aged 30 months in oak. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now until 2015.

REORDERS

Amicus Cellars' Bordeaux based wines are very limited in production and represent the best barrels from beautifully farmed vineyards in the Spring Mountain District of Napa Valley. Following a procession of 90+ scores and rave reviews, the Amicus 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon is celebrated as one of their most promising and highly rated vintages to date.

The **Amicus Cellars 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon** retails winery-direct for \$55.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

2-Bottle Members \$45.00 /bottle*
4-Bottle Members &
Multi-Series Members \$41.00 /bottle*
*2 bottle min. order [Plus shipping]

Call: 1-800-266-8888
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