

ROBERT STOREY CELLARS

2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Cole Ranch

CRAFTED BY: JESSICA BOONE, HEALDSBURG CA

PRODUCTION: 1200 CASES

APPELLATION: This exclusive Cabernet Sauvignon comes from the Cole Ranch. It's likely you've never heard of Cole Ranch as this tiny appellation is currently planted to a mere 55 acres of vineyard. In 1971 John Cole left a real estate career in Ohio to follow his passion, and join the wine boom in California. After a lot of research and a little luck John came across a striking piece of property in the highlands north of Sonoma. He had a feeling that this worn out sheep ranch should be planted with wine grapes, and after 2 years of hard work his dream came to fruition. In the treacherous, high elevation landscape of Cole Ranch the vines hunger for sun, dig their roots deep into the hillside, and struggle to produce a bountiful crop. As harvest approaches the daytime temperature will normally get up to 80 degrees, then the nights cool down to a chilly 30 degrees. All vineyard work is done by hand, and it is definitely a labor of love to coax these vines to produce any crop at all.

It is no easy task to designate a new appellation. The government must be petitioned and must be shown that a specific growing region is unique, unlike any other spot in California. Using statistics from the vineyard site, and wines made by Dick Arrowood at Chateau St. Jean, John was able to show how distinctive and exceptional his vineyard was, and the unique quality of wines it could produce. So in 1983 Cole Ranch became the smallest appellation in the U.S., and the only appellation to have a single owner.

Cabernet Sauvignon does exceptionally well at the Cole Ranch. The cool climate, steep hillside, and high elevation, allow the grapes to hang longer on the vine. This means the grapes are able to maintain acidity, and develop flavors, before the sugars get too high. The frugal crop means density and intensity, the cool climate lend to the vibrant red fruit that is typical of Cole Ranch. If you happen to find your glass filled with a Cabernet from the Cole Ranch, consider yourself lucky, as your savoring something truly distinctive and quite rare!

WINEMAKING

Fermented in stainless steel tank. Aged in barrel for 15 months. 1/3 new barrels, 1/3 once used, 1/3 neutral.

TASTING NOTES

Dark fruits overwhelm the nose showing blackberry, ripe black cherry, and cassis. The palate presents depth and concentration with hints of toasted vanilla and cedar, mingling with a smooth dusty tannin. The supple finish is long and lingering, with layers of black plum and baking spices.