



ABOUT CORO MENDOCINO

In 2000 a winemaker roundtable asked themselves the question: what does Mendocino County do best? Their answer was to create Coro Mendocino and distill the character and expression of Mendocino County's soil and climate into a distinctive wine.

Coro Mendocino is not just a special wine but also a regional winemaking protocol for Mendocino County in the style of renowned European wine regions like Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Chianti Classico. Their goal in being the first in America to take up this ambitious challenge was to create a red wine blend showcasing the rich heritage, unique terroir, and distinctive character of Mendocino County.

According to Dennis Patton, one of the original founding winemakers of Coro, "Coro Mendocino was developed to express the very best that Mendocino has to offer. Our goal is to create a wine much like the famed appellation-controllée wines of France that definitively showcases the distinctive flavors of our region. Each Coro wine is a collaborative effort, into which we have put our hearts and souls."

Inspired by the Latin word for 'chorus', separate voices singing the same tune, Coro wines are a blend of heritage Mendocino varietals. All Coro wines must be made from 100% Mendocino County grapes with Zinfandel as the majority of the blend. "Many Mendocino grape growers are third and fourth generation families who chose to grow Zinfandel because they've learned over decades that it grows best here," says Sally Ottoson owner and winemaker of Pacific Star Winery.

The county's long history with Zinfandel rings through in Coro. "Some of the oldest vines in the county are Zinfandel, which showcases our heritage," said Rich Parducci winemaker at McNab Ridge. According to Winemaker Greg Graziano, "Mendocino is also blessed with many diverse climates and soil types that showcase Zinfandel's quality".

Zinfandel makes up a minimum of 40% and up to a maximum of 70% of the blend. "Having that base gives a common, familiar background to the wines," says Parducci Wine Cellars' winemaker Bob Swain. "The 70 percent maximum restriction was implemented to purposely ensure that the wines could not be classified as just another Zinfandel."

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The approved second tier varietals for blending may not exceed the percentage of Zinfandel used and include Syrah, Petite Sirah, Carignane, Sangiovese, Grenache, Dolcetto, Charbono, Barbera, and Primitivo. Winemakers also have the option of adding a ‘free play’ element to their blends of up to 10% from any single or combined vinifera source. “Mendocino has a strong Italian heritage with Sangiovese, Barbera, Primitivo, and Dolcetto,” says Philo Ridge winemaker and owner Fred Buonanno. “We are using grapes that have been traditionally grown here (since pre-prohibition), hence our signature Zinfandel but also Syrah, Petite Sirah, and Grenache.”

The Coro production protocol also regulates the chemistry and ageing parameters for all Coro Mendocino blends. Guidelines must be met for alcohol level, pH, total acidity, glucose/fructose enzymatic, volatile acidity, and malic acid.

All Coro wines must be aged at least one year in barrel, a minimum of 25% and a maximum of 75% in new oak, and a minimum of one year in bottle before release.

Each Coro blend undergoes rigorous tasting trials. The wines are tasted up to four times by a panel of winemakers in a roundtable setting. Their discussion focuses on how each blend can be enhanced to meet the high quality standards of Coro. “Every time we have a panel tasting, I find things that I wished I had in my blend, and I go back and look at it again,” says Winemaker David Brutocao. “Peer review helps us discover how good our wine can be and is a huge force driving all of us to make higher quality wines.”

A selection panel of five individuals, at least three being participating Coro winemakers, conducts the final qualifying tasting to determine if the blends have achieved the distinction required to earn the Coro seal.

All Coro Mendocino wines use identical bottles, capsules, and shippers. They also share a common label design with only slight differences for each producer (winery logo, winemaker signature & technical information). The goal with the Coro packaging, as with Chianti Classico wines, is to build an instantly recognizable look and feel for Coro.

“We aim to create clarity in the minds of the consumer and trade about Mendocino County- the same clarity they have now about Napa and Cabernet or Sonoma and Chardonnay, “ says Paul Dolan, a founding member of Coro. “People should think of Mendocino as the traditional and natural home of the Mediterranean varieties we chose for Coro and the home of ultra-premium winemaking.”

For more information, visit www.coromendocino.com.

About Mendocino County

Mendocino County is one of California's most climatically diverse growing regions, encircled by California's Coastal Mountain Range, the Pacific Ocean and the great northern redwood forests. Its rolling hills and ridges separate it into many unique microclimates so it is possible to find in its borders, warm sun-soaked valleys dotted with oaks, mighty redwood forests with salmon spawning in nearby creeks and foggy coastal beaches.

Within Mendocino County, just over 17,000 of its 2.4 million acres are planted to winegrapes. The twelve approved and pending AVAs include Anderson Valley, Cole Ranch, Covelo, Dos Rios, McDowell Valley, Mendocino, Mendocino Ridge, Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Sanel Valley, Ukiah Valley, and Yorkville Highlands.

Mendocino County's is dominated by family farmers, many of whom have lived for generations on their land—farmers at the forefront of the sustainable, organic, Biodynamic and fish friendly farming movements.

For more information, visit www.visitmendocino.com.