

ROOTDOWN

Year Founded: 2014

Region: Healdsburg, California

Owner: Mike Lucia

Quote: "Rootdown concentrates on what the roots drink rather than what the sun gives you. I want wines with tension and minerality grown in organic vineyards." -Mike Lucia

-Organic-

The Rootdown label refers to the grassroots of winemaking and the downward influence of the soil on wine, particularly in organic winemaking. Rootdown focuses on varietal specific wines from single vineyards that lead with earth and texture, rather than only fruit. Mike Lucia is no newcomer to the Northern California wine scene, as the owner and producer of multiple wine brands including Rootdown, Cole Ranch, and Es Okay.



His winemaking roots go all the way back to the early 90s, where as a teenager he began working in the cellar. Since then, he's been busy: studied in the Fresno State Enology program, made wine for Copain, Goldeneye, and consulted for brands with similar mentalities. In 2016, Mike "hit the gas pedal" on

Rootdown, increasing both the quantity and varieties of wine he made. His newest venture, Cole Ranch Vineyard and AVA is testing all of his knowledge, as he studies a unique terroir (the smallest AVA in the US) and pushes to find the best Alpine varietals that will thrive in the Cole Ranch soil and climate. Currently, Rootdown is making wines from the more obscure varieties. Yet over the next few years, the brand will begin to focus on Jura-inspired varietals with Cole Ranch as its source. Stylistically, the wines will continue to be low alcohol, high acid, and with a decidedly hands-off approach, allowing the grapes and specific sites to speak for themselves. After close to 20 years in the biz, Mike's skill as a winemaker is finely tuned, but he usually prefers to let curiosity inform what happens with his wines. He is constantly having fun making decisions that he "shouldn't" make, and always playing with "What if?"

2022 'Cole Ranch Vineyard' Savagnin



100% dry farmed. The berries go through a crusher before being bladder pressed for more time in contact with the skins. The wine is then fermented in ½ neutral burgundy barrels and ½ neutral cigar before aging in neutral barrels and then the last 2 months in tank.

Every year our Savagnin continues to be a major topic of conversation in its structure, aromatics and ability to pair with food. This wine is like indulging in summer melon granité sprinkled with big flakes of Maldon salt. It is everything Anjou Pear, grippiness of its skin and explosion of juiciness, that crunchy texture that counterpoints the juice. The balance of this wine's lean structure but delightful aromatics of daffodil and lemongrass will keep you coming back to more. We promise.



2021 Rootdown 'Cole Ranch Vineyard' Pinot Noir

100% Pinot Noir. 100% de-stemmed and fermented with their wild yeast in an old open top oak tank. To minimize tannin and to boost aromatic extraction, the Pinot Noir will only see one gentle pump over a day until dry. Post press we finish the elevage in 80% neutral barrels and 20% once used French oak. Secondary fermentation is also native.

“An intriguing, earthy, minerally aroma continues in the flavors of this medium-bodied and attractively taut wine from the tiny American Viticultural Area of Cole Ranch. Snappy red-cherry and cranberry flavors meet a chalky, tangy quality on the palate for a sense of freshness and grip.” -Wine Enthusiast



2021 Rootdown Trousseau St. Amant Vineyard, Amador County

Since 2014, Rootdown has been purchasing this certified organic fruit from St. Amant Vineyard located in Amador County between Jackson and Ione, CA. Originally planted to own rooted zinfandel in 1972, the owner later grafted over a section to five Portuguese varieties. Bastardo (Trousseau) was one of the varieties. In 2004 they replanted the Rootdown section of Trousseau on 1.8 acres. The soil here is the Honcut series which consists of very deep, well drained soils that formed in moderately coarse textured alluvium from basic igneous and granitic rocks. 100% Trousseau Noir. Hand harvested on August 31st. Because this was a small harvest, I just had one fermentation going which was 50% whole cluster, 50% de-stemmed. Post press, each lot was aged separately in neutral oak and then blended one month before bottling. As with all Rootdown wines, the fermentations are all natural. Serve this wine chilled and then let it warm up in your glass. You get a nice sense of structure followed by the warming aromatics.



2020 Rootdown Cole Ranch Merlot, Mendocino County

The Cole Ranch vineyard sits on 180 acres of the Boonville grade, right between the famed Anderson Valley and “Inner Mendo” growing regions. Originally planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Riesling and Merlot in 1973, the historic vineyard has since expanded its lineup to include Jura and Savoie varieties truly suited to the narrow mountain valley’s long, cool growing season. Dry farmed for most of their existence, these vines send their thick roots down into the valley’s gravelly-clay-loam soil, drawing up the minerals that contribute to our wine’s complexity and age ability. 100% de-stemmed and used pump overs to mix the tanks. Secondary fermentation finished in the mix of neutral French oak. A bold yet elegant wine. Bergamot, grapefruit peel, black tea, cocoa nib, pencil shavings, firm tannins full body, high acid, black cherry, red mulberry.

ES OKAY



What is it? Es Okay How is it? Es Okay

Year Founded: 2014

Region: Mendocino, California

Owner: Mike Lucia

Fun Fact: Cole Ranch is among a few vineyards in Mendocino County that are being reimagined as a home for the grape varieties that thrive in Europe's cold mountainous regions, especially the Alps.

-Organic-

Nowhere do the rules say that wine made from serious fruit has to be taken seriously. Wine is just fermented juice, after all! We believe drinking should be pleasurable — whether one is shamelessly crushing rosé at a baby shower, or undermining a co-worker's supposedly fancier bottle selection at the seasonal office party, by showing up with a juicy red that actually begs to be consumed (with that mediocre sushi platter). You could consider the finer points — that this wine includes grapes from some of California's best vineyards (ahem, such as Cole Ranch) or that the wine is minimally sulfured and maximally fresh from the grapes' naturally high acidity. The bottom line is that you don't need to overthink tasty. You have our permission to crush this wine. Go ahead, es okay!



Es Okay 2022 White Wine



80% Cortese Lost Slough Vineyard – Clarksburg
8% Chardonnay – North Coast
6% Pinot Gris Skin ferment – Herrerger Vineyard – Clarksburg
6% Chenin Blanc – Herrerger Vineyard – Clarksburg

Es Okay for the win! In 2022 we stumbled upon a good amount of Organic Cortese from the Lost Slough Vineyard in Clarksburg after we found out our Pinot Gris and Chenin Blanc got hit hard by the frost. Clusters were big, juicy and full of natural acidity, fermentation saw barrels and eggs. The tiny bit of Pinot Gris we did get was fermented on skin in tank for 10 days before pressing and barrel fermented until dry. The Chenin Blanc went direct to press and also barrel fermented. As for the Chardonnay, well, its Chard.

Es Okay 2022 Rosé



50% Pinot Gris, 50% Grenache

This year we tried something new for the Es Okay Rosé. Our friends at Heringer Vineyards in Clarksburg sold us Pinot Gris that came in with a ton of color, so we went for it and skin fermented for 8 days before pressing. This left us with a powerful Pinot Gris. Our friend, Tom Gore, recently planted a Grenache Vineyard in Mendocino County specifically for Rosé. He crops this site for max tonnage so the wines are leaner with almost no color post press. This year is a 50% blend of each. Super yummy. Pinot Gris was destemmed and fermented on skin and pressed off on the 8th day. Post press we finished the fermentation in stainless steel. This wine was racked once off of its gross lees and returned for aging in tank. For the Grenache, we whole cluster pressed, let settle for 2 days then transferred to 60 gallon barrel and 520 gallon eggs.

This Rosé is all your poolside hopes and dreams. Bright watermelon and strawberry acidity rolls off the palate while tart cranberry crudo pops in the mouth. Some crazy rhubarb savory-ness and iron like minerality join the dance party as well. It's like nibbling on organic fruit leathers and biting into that fleshy part of a pineapple.

Es Okay 2021 Red Wine



If I was a 21-year-old little leaguer, this would be my jam. Literally. Plum jam, big league chew, concord grape all hit the senses. A nice medium bodied, medium tannin yet chewy with some black cherry earth tones. There's some spice in there but I can't put my finger on it just yet. You tell me.

All Mendocino County
 80% Syrah
 5% Tinta Caõ
 5% Tinta Roriz
 5% Tinta Francisca
 5% Tinta Barroa

Here we go again. I was supposed to receive 15 tons of these Portuguese varieties but because of the drought, only 5 came in. But Es okay, my friend Matt came through and let me poach some of his Syrah he was making in Hopland. The Syrah was destemmed and fermented in one large vat where the Tintas were fermented in one ton bins with half being fully carbonic. Not a very long elevage in barrel so this wine is young but very ready to drink!