

William Cole

VINEYARDS



In 1869, John and Hannah Weinberger purchased a 240-acre estate in St. Helena from Charles and Carolina Krug and began building a winery that would hold the distinction of being the first stone wine cellar in St. Helena.

In 1999 Jane and William Ballentine enthusiastically began an extensive renovation of the 1873 stone wine cellar on the bottom level of the historic three-story 19th century building. Moving their family into the upper two floors, they began to uncover the incredibly rich history of the property and it became their goal to restore the original integrity of the winery. Subsequently, the property was deemed so important to the history of Napa Valley that the county wrote a special historic ordinance to allow it to be reopened as a winery.

Fourth generation Napa Valley grape grower/winemaker William Ballentine and his wife Jane choose to name the property William Cole for “William” and their son Cole and dedicated their Cabernet Sauvignon, Cuvee Clair, to their daughter “Claire”.

Winemaking practices are gentle and slow. There is no hard and fast schedule nor rush in the making or releasing of our wines. For our Cabernet, each distinct vineyard block is harvested, fermented and barrel aged separately. As a result, the expression of each individual lot resonates in the wine with layers of complexity and dimension.

Recent Press

90-92 Points Robert Parker Wine Advocate - 2012 William Cole Cuvee Clair Cabernet Sauvignon

93+ Points Robert Parker Wine Advocate - 2010 William Cole Cuvee Clair Cabernet Sauvignon

95 Points Robert Parker Wine Advocate - 2004 William Cole Cuvee Clair Cabernet Sauvignon

Still in barrel, William Cole's 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon Cuvée Claire shows plenty of blueberry and blackberry fruit, sweet tannin, a medium to full-bodied mouth-feel and impeccable craftsmanship. This young, still primary, beauty should drink well for 20+ years

Intense aromas of cassis, licorice and earth jump from the glass of this dense purple-colored wine. A cascade of fruit hides some serious structure in this rich, juicy, full-bodied, young, primary 2010. Bursting with potential, this intriguing wine should be forgotten for 1-3 years and drunk over the following 15+.

I never tasted a wine from William Cole Vineyards before, but their 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon Cuvee Claire is an impressive, beautifully elegant as well as authoritatively powerful offering. Gorgeous fruit, terrific purity, an enticing, multilayered texture, sweet tannin, a long finish and super aromatics make for a modern day classic, full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink it over the next decade.

Vineyards

A direct reflection of our soil composition along the lower slopes of Spring Mountain, “Cuvee Claire” is cultivated from our 2.5 acre estate vineyard, which enjoys a historic legacy going back to the 1870s. The estate is comprised of a variety of soil types; silty loam and volcanic soils interlaced with black obsidian; our small vineyard is diverse and complex. These soils have excellent drainage which forces the cabernet vines to reach deep for their water and nutrients, what results is smaller, stressed berries which yield thicker skins and ultimately more concentrated flavors ensuring a rich and cellar worthy wine. “My goal in the vineyard is to celebrate the distinct qualities that each of the varying soil types has to offer.”