



# Northern

**Northern Terroir** – Premium American Oak



Mendocino Cooperage



# The Essence of American Terroir



**C**limate, soil, moisture and sunlight influence subtle nuances of oak expression much as they affect grapes in the vineyard. Consequently, crafting oak wine barrels to promote consistent sensory expression is, like winemaking itself, both a science and an art.

As the Pioneers of Premium American Oak, we begin with a deep respect for and knowledge of American forest terroir, understanding and nurturing the regional qualities and distinct profiles of this country's forests. Our American white oak is selected from specific forests, where the characteristics of the wood are both unique and predictable.

## Forest Selection Methodology

**Spatial definition matters. Oak Forest regions as ecosystems exist both within and apart from other ecosystems. Like vines, trees and forests are products of their environment; both responsive to and active in shaping regional qualities that define an ecosystem.**

**Our success in capturing the essence of American oak terroirs begins with our forest research team, which, unique to our industry, employs sophisticated ecological land classification techniques to identify unique but homogeneous white oak forest regions. One of these techniques, and a cornerstone of our sustainable oak procurement strategy is Ecoregion-based forest delineation which is based upon a successful land classification strategy developed by the US Forest Service. Ecological land classification involves ecosystem assessment of a variety of influences including but not limited to:**

- **Climate**
- **Geomorphology (origin, nature, description and classification of present landforms)**
- **Soils**
- **Hydrology (water movement through the system)**
- **Atmospheric conditions**
- **Vegetation**
- **Fauna**
- **Cultural ecology (historical relationship between humans and the natural environment of a particular area or region)**

**While science based, Ecoregion delineation methodology is also part art in the sense that ecological cycles, characteristics and interactions are not always readily apparent or easily measured and must be interpreted from the development of vegetation, soil, landform characteristics and other related influences.**



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### SENSORY SIGNIFICANCE BORN OF THE FOREST



Like the finest oak forests in Europe, American forests are capable of producing exceptional consistency. The challenge is to identify unique forest regions and to preserve the nuances unique to each.

Our Northern oak comes from the northwestern edge of the species' natural range, where Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa converge – the Northern Heartland. Forests in this region are subjected to harsh winters with extreme cold and heavy snowfall. Growing seasons are short. Mature, well-drained, Limestone-based soils, that predate the last ice age, anchor this area's oak forests on cool, moist ravine slopes. These slopes create ideal aspects that protect the trees from harsh sun and dry westerly winds. All this contributes to the slow growth of uniform, undisturbed, high-quality timber.

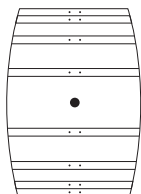
### SELECT ECOREGION CHARACTERISTICS

#### Geomorphology

- Maturely dissected, upland plateau missed by last glacial advance
- Elevation ranges 600–1200 feet
- Local relief from 100–600 feet

#### Climate

- Humid Continental
- 4 distinct seasons, interior continental climate
- Annual precipitation = 29–34 inches (40–45% of which occurs in the growing season)
- Average annual temp ranges = 45–50°F
- Average growing season = 135–156 days



**Soils** – Dominant soil classification: Alfisol – Udalfs, comprised largely of dolomitic limestone overlain with glacial wind-deposited loess.

**Predominant forest vegetation** – Mixed oak forests including hickory, butternut and black walnut on mesic slopes and uplands with maple/basswood dominating valley lowlands.



America is home to some of the world's finest oak forests. However it is only recently that the skill in applying this unique resource to fine winemaking has matched European expertise. Today, one cooper is pioneering truly premium wine barrels of outstandingly consistent quality.

Mendocino Cooperage is committed to consistency because we know how important it is to you and your wine. We have introduced consistent best practices to every aspect of our operation.

This commitment extends to the last detail of how our forest regions are chosen, how our oak is selected, milled and seasoned, and how our barrels are handcrafted. We practice sustainable use of natural resources, from forest regeneration and management to the most efficient utilization of raw materials.

Our commitment to consistency has paid off for us as we've grown. Its most important beneficiaries, though, are our customers who know they can always rely on predictable results – from barrel to barrel, year to year.

## Your Choice of **Premium American Oak**

Our Northern American white oak is one of the premium terroir oaks we source. We also source Appalachian American white oak. We'd be happy to discuss them all with you and work with you in designing wine barrels that best suit your needs.



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