



HILLTOP RANCH – HISTORIC TIMELINE
20 acres, 4 parcels

- 1834 Property used as a cattle ranch as part of a large (26,581 acre) Mexican land grant called Rancho Tularcitos given by Governor Figueroa to Rafael Gomez
- 1880 Purchased by Alberto Trescony, used for raising sheep, cattle and a dairy
- 1889 Trescony sold a portion of the land (254.46 acres), including current Hilltop Ranch property, to Frederick Gates, a local locksmith and gunsmith
- 1889 Gates sold property to Steffani, and the property changed ownership multiple times over the next 30 years
- 1928 Karl D. and Lousie B. Mathiot, in search of the “perfect ranch”, purchased the 243.21 acres in September 1928. *According to local sources, including Mathiot’s grandson, the first Carmel Valley post office was on this property. It was also an overnight stagecoach stop on the stage route from Salinas to Jamesburg and Tassajara.*
- 1929 “Rancho Carmelo” - Mathiots open a summer ranch for girls and boys on the property. As noted in historic brochures on *Rancho Carmelo for Girls: “the climate is invigorating, free of fog, with cool nights... Winding trails extend into a country of varied scenery, wooded mountains and valley”.*
- 1934- 1953 California’s first Dude Ranch - Mathiots operated what is commonly known as the first guest or “dude” ranch in California on the property. They bred Arabians and Palomino horses for use by their guests on the ranch trails, and also operated a small store and bar that became a gathering place for local residents. As noted in historic brochures on *Dude Ranch – Rancho Carmelo, it was “Perfect in Summer – Ideal in Winter - California’s famous guest ranch in beautiful Carmel Valley... historic land of the Caballeros in the heart of the great Salinas cattle country.”*
- 1949 Mathiots began selling off parts of their Rancho Carmelo land. A successful businessman from Fresno, F.Rex Sportledger purchased what is today Hilltop Ranch. He more than likely built the existing barn on the property. After the purchase, K.D. Mathiot continued to board his prize-winning Arabian mare, Coalani, at the barn. Locals recall it being used for community gatherings, horse shows, meals and dances over the years.
- 1979 After various exchanges, the property was deeded to Alfred and Elizabeth Gawthrop, former CEO of Pebble Beach Corp. Mrs. Gawthrop used the property as her getaway from Pebble Beach and kept her horses in the barn.
- 1964 Dick Lumpkin marries Gail Gawthrop, daughter of Alfred and Elizabeth, and ultimately acquires the property known today as Hilltop Ranch. Total property spans twenty acres over four parcels
- 2002 Under Lumpkin’s ownership, the first vines were planted at Hilltop Ranch – Hilltop Ranch Vineyard: three acres of Pinot Noir and .5 acres Pinot Gris.
- 2004 First harvest of Hilltop Ranch Vineyard grapes