



J. LOHR
WINE CLUBS

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

MEMBER NEWSLETTER




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"A nice mix of spring showers and sunny weather has bud break well underway throughout the amazing 4,000-acre J. Lohr winegrowing estate."

— Steve Peck

Dear J. Lohr Wine Club Members,

As you are reading this, the 2025 growing season has begun in our vineyards in Monterey, Paso Robles, and the Napa Valley. We experienced a fairly mild winter, and (fingers crossed), rainfall totals are slowly creeping towards normal seasonal averages. A nice mix of spring showers and sunny weather has bud break well underway throughout the amazing 4,000-acre J. Lohr winegrowing estate. It's a bit early to be making predictions, but if Mother Nature continues to cooperate, our long-range forecasts indicate continuing pleasant spring conditions, which will get the vines' annual growth cycle off to a strong start.

At this time of the year, our cellars and barrel rooms have a lot of activity. The 2024 reds are in barrel for extended aging, while the 2023 reds and 2024 whites are being prepared for bottling. Our winemaking team and the Lohr family have assessed hundreds of potential components and blends. As we wait for these exciting future releases, we have carefully chosen some sensational new J. Lohr white wines from last year's harvest and some outstanding reds, primarily from the 2022 vintage, for this spring members' shipment. Winemaker, White Wine Kristen Barnhisel has included

the limited and popular J. Lohr F&G Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc and J. Lohr *Gesture* Viognier from the 2024 vintage. Red Winemaker Brenden Wood is understandably proud of the new releases of the J. Lohr Highlands Bench Pinot Noir from the Santa Lucia Highlands appellation and our J. Lohr Carol's Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon, grown on our Napa Valley property in St Helena.

Kristen, Brenden, and our stellar vineyard and cellar teams have poured their hearts and passion into nurturing each of these wines, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts once you've tried them. Be sure to book a tasting or make time for an upcoming club event at our J. Lohr Paso Robles or San Jose Wine Centers. I hope to see you soon. As always, from the entire J. Lohr extended family, our gratitude for your friendship and support of our winegrowing efforts.

Cheers!



Steve Peck
VP, Winemaking



2024 J. Lohr F&G Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc



The grapes for this limited-release F&G Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc are grown in the alluvial path of the Arroyo Seco River where vines struggle in the sand-laden, cobblestone soils that define the Arroyo Seco AVA. These rocky soils and the cooling winds off Monterey Bay keep yields in check and produce fruit with intensity, minerality, and exceptional weight.

The 2024 growing season was characterized by a cooler-than-normal spring and summer. The cool weather enhanced the key lime, grapefruit, passionfruit, and Meyer lemon flavors in the Sauvignon Musque grapes, while the afternoon winds helped slow maturity of the grapes and increase their texture. The F&G Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc is crafted to be a New World expression of pure varietal character in a classic, Old-World style. Aged for six months sur lie in stainless steel (42%) and French oak and Acacia barrels (58%).

Winemaker, White Wine Kristen Barnhisel and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"The 2024 F&G Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc is pale yellow in color and highlights aromas of honeysuckle, yellow floral, grapefruit, passionfruit, lemongrass, and a hint of fig. These aromas are complemented on the palate by the bright flavors of key lime, Meyer lemon, mineral, vanilla, and dried tarragon with a smooth palate texture. Enjoy this wine as an aperitif with goat cheese or oysters, or with an entrée of herbed chicken, pasta primavera, or shrimp scampi."*

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2024 J. Lohr Gesture Viognier



The grapes for the *Gesture* Viognier are grown on our Rain Catcher Vineyard in the Adelaida District of western Paso Robles. Rain Catcher was planted in 2010 and is the westernmost vineyard in the appellation. It captures the highest annual rainfall of any winegrowing property within the Paso Robles AVA; its overall climate is nearly identical to that of the northern Rhône, Viognier's birthplace. Rain Catcher's warm days with southern and western exposures on its hillsides help to naturally develop ripe, lush flavors, while its cool nights allow for extra hang time, giving the wine power and depth. The climate, combined with the well-drained soils of calcareous shale and weathered sandstone, makes this vineyard's terroir ideally suited to growing Viognier. After hand-picking and a 28-day fermentation, the wine aged for six months in Acacia barrels and French oak puncheons.

Winemaker, White Wine Kristen Barnhisel and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"Pale yellow in color, the 2024 J. Lohr Gesture Viognier offers aromas of yellow flowers, white peach, nectarine, and orange. These aromas are complemented by the juicy, balanced palate of lemon custard, ripe orange, vanilla, and a long, textured finish. Enjoy as an aperitif with Jarlsberg, manchego, or soft cheeses or as an entrée with chicken curry with apricot, seared scallops, or saffron risotto."*

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2023 J. Lohr Gesture Mourvèdre



Mourvèdre is a classic cultivar of France's southern Rhône. It is known as Matro in Spain. The J. Lohr *Gesture* Mourvèdre comes from plantings at our J. Lohr Stairway Vineyard, located in the Adelaida District. This part of Paso Robles is an ancient, uplifted seabed; fossilized seashells are often found in the ground even though the vineyard is perched at 1,500-foot average elevation. Given the very steep hillsides, only crawler tractors can be used to safely farm this site. Our Rhône variety plantings, including Mourvèdre, do particularly well at this rugged location. Harvest occurred on November 3, 2023. After a whole-berry fermentation with light punch downs and six days on the skins, this wine was aged 16 months in second-fill and older, tight-grain French oak puncheons.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"The 2023 J. Lohr Gesture Mourvèdre interfuses brambly red raspberry and candied cherry aromas with distinctly herbal, coastal chaparral notes. On the palate, peppery spice and wild sage meet finely tuned tannins and a plump, red berry finish. This wine is excellent with many of the specialties of southwestern France and Catalonia, such as pork roast or a platter of prosciutto tapas, Marcona almonds, fresh figs, and aged cheeses."*

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2022 J. Lohr Shotwell Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon



The J. Lohr Shotwell Vineyard is located in the El Pomar District of Paso Robles. The climate there is a moderate Region II on the Winkler heat accumulation scale, which characterizes it as a fairly cool location for growing the late-ripening Cabernet Sauvignon variety. This cane-pruned vineyard is laid out with 8-foot by 4-foot vine spacing on calcareous Linne-Calodo soil; it was planted from 2013 to 2015. The undulating hills at this location required that the row direction for planting follows the slope of each block. The Cabernet fruit for this limited bottling was picked on September 12 and October 7, 2022. After a seven day maceration/fermentation, the wine was aged for 18 months in 60-gallon French oak barrels from coopers Sylvain and Marcel Cadet, 15% of which was new wood.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"Generous aromas of black currant and fresh blackberry with added notes of violet, thyme, cracked pepper, and holiday spices. Dark, dense fruit on the palate with a juicy core and medium-weight tannins. This classic Cabernet Sauvignon is extraordinary with grilled steak with tarragon-beurre blanc sauce and roasted asparagus."*

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2023 J. Lohr Highlands Bench Pinot Noir



This J. Lohr Highlands Bench Pinot Noir comes from the Costa Vineyard, just west of the historic Soledad Mission in the Santa Lucia Highlands appellation of Monterey. The Santa Lucia Highlands is one of California's premier addresses for growing luxury-class Pinot. We were invited to partner with the Costa family in 2008 to establish a Pinot Noir and Chardonnay vineyard in this prestigious location. The vineyard's elevated, close proximity to Monterey Bay and its eastern slope and aspect provide a cool, sunny, ideal environment for growing intensely flavored Burgundian varietals. The Pinot Noir hand-harvested for the 2023 Highlands Bench bottling was a 70/30 blend of Dijon origin 667 and 777 clones. The fruit was sorted and then bled 12% (known as the saignée method) to increase concentration prior to fermentation. It was aged eight months on light lees in Burgundy-style French oak barrels, 38% new wood, prior to bottling in June 2024.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"Aromas of dark black cherries with dashes of mocha, orange zest, cola, and dried flowers. Concentrated raspberry flavors layer on top of a creamy, mouth-coating texture with a bit of anise and peppercorn on the finish. Delightful with oysters Rockefeller, grilled salmon, or a mushroom risotto."*

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2022 J. Lohr Buena Vista Vineyard Saint-Macaire



This 2022 Saint-Macaire was grown at the Buena Vista Road Vineyard in the warmer Region III climate of the Paso Robles Estrella District; conditions here are ideal for late-ripening reds such as this rare Bordeaux variety. This thick-skinned grape gets its name from the village of Saint-Macaire in the French appellation of Côtes de Bordeaux Saint-Macaire. Over the past 50 years, plantings of this heritage variety have dwindled from several hundred acres to less than one acre in its native country – just as it has gained popularity in California, where it may be better suited for our drier climate. Clone 03 cuttings for this planting were secured from UC Davis in 2014. Saint-Macaire is a fruitful variety that sets a heavy crop of big clusters with large berries. The farming plan required pruning to one bud in the winter and thinning the crop extensively in mid-summer to capture dark color and flavor intensity. The grapes were hand-picked and then whole-berry fermented in a 12-ton open-top tank with punch downs in the mornings and evenings. Aged 15 months in French oak barrels from cooper Saury.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"The 2022 J. Lohr Saint-Macaire is Inky dark purple in color. Displays raspberry preserves, dried cranberry, and mulled spice aromatics with unique smoky notes that are typical of this rare Bordeaux variety. Plump and supple on the palate with ultra-fine tannins. Enjoy with grilled red meats and roasted potatoes, or perhaps a board of quality cured ham and aged cheese."*



2022 J. Lohr Cuvée St. E



The inspiration for our J. Lohr Cuvée St. E comes from the Grand Cru wines of St. Émilion of Bordeaux's famed Right Bank region. These memorable wines are primarily composed of Cabernet Franc and/or Merlot. The 2022 vintage delivered unparalleled quality to the Paso Robles region. Temperatures were quite cool through budbreak in April. Plenty of warm, sunny days followed through the completion of veraison in August. An unprecedented heatwave beginning August 31 stressed the vines; happily, cool, cloudy weather and some drizzle brought relief to the vineyards leading up to harvest. Cabernet Franc grown on Block 60 of our J. Lohr Home Ranch was farmed by vineyard manager John Pierini and his team specifically for the Cuvée St. E program. This block consistently provides fruit of deep color, polished tannins, and the complex, savory elements cherished by Cabernet Franc fans. Clusters were hand-picked on October 10, 2022. After fermenting eight days on the skins, the wine was aged in French oak cooperage for 18 months (58% new wood). Final blend: Cabernet Franc 69%, Cabernet Sauvignon 26%, Malbec 5%.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: "J. Lohr Cuvée St. E captures the savory side of the classic Bordeaux varieties. Sophisticated blueberry and boysenberry compote aromas fold together with cacao nib, fresh-brewed espresso, and thyme. On the palate, juicy black cherry flavors wrap around a dusty tannin core leading to a long, pleasing finish. A perfect pairing for filet mignon with a shallot-cream sauce or braised veal shanks over a bed of polenta."

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2015 J. Lohr Cuvée St. E



Paso Robles saw a fourth consecutive year of below normal rainfall in 2015. The dry conditions experienced locally that year mirrored the extreme climatic trends witnessed across the entire state of California. Budbreak was early, as is typical in dry years, with vines coming out of dormancy in mid-March. Good growing conditions in April brought rapid shoot growth. This was followed by an unusually cold period during the early May bloom that reduced crop yield by roughly 40% due to shatter. This lighter crop of Cabernet Franc was harvested in the early morning of October 8, 2015 with the fully-ripened skins and seeds essential to taming this particular cultivar's potentially grippy tannins. The 2015 Cuvée St. E blend harnesses that unique and ageable texture along with its savory fruit characters. Aged 18 months in 225-liter French oak barrels from coopers DJ and Sylvain; 65% new wood. Final blend: 80% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon.

VP Winemaking Steve Peck's extended tasting notes: "After almost eight years of bottle age, the 2015 J. Lohr Cuvée St. E continues to capture the ripe but savory side of the classic Cabernet Franc variety. The wine is still dark in color, though now showing a bit of brick red around the rim. Its original aromas of red currant have given way to riper plum and cassis. These darker fruits are echoed on the palate, along with roast coffee and chocolate notes. The tannins have softened considerably over the years, leaving a lovely, long, cocoa and spice-laden finish. Should prove a superb pairing with grilled spring lamb or flavorful hard cheeses."



2022 J. Lohr Carol's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon



The J. Lohr Carol's Vineyard lies along the storied Silverado Trail in northern St. Helena. The well-drained, gravelly, sandy loam soil and Bordeaux-like climate of the Napa Valley is ideally suited to producing richly textured, luxury-quality fruit. We hand-harvested our Cabernet Sauvignon from Carol's Vineyard into half-ton bins on September 14 and 15, 2022. The berries were sorted using the Pellenc Selectiv system, then destemmed and crushed with the Pellenc Extractiv system. After fermentation on skins, the wine was racked to French oak Bordeaux Export-style barrels (coopers Nadalie and Saury) for 18 months of élevage. A \$3 donation for every bottle sold of this special wine benefits National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc.* outreach and services.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP, Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"From another exceptional vintage in the St. Helena AVA, the 2022 Carol's Vineyard release displays its Napa pedigree through fragrant black cherry and cassis aromas, layered neatly with hazelnut and patisserie from the French oak barrel aging. Dark berry flavors saturate the palate and intertwine with well-tuned tannins and spiced notes of cinnamon, nutmeg, and cocoa. Pair with grilled ribeye steak with rosemary and shallots, or porcini pork tenderloin."*

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2022 J. Lohr Hilltop Cabernet Sauvignon



The primary source of the 2022 Hilltop Cabernet Sauvignon is our J. Lohr Shotwell Vineyard in the cool, Templeton Gap-influenced El Pomar District of Paso Robles. A small portion of the blend comes from our Beck Vineyard, located at 1,700-foot elevation in the Creston District. The final 5% comes from our J. Lohr ranches located within the mountainous Adelaida District. Our Paso Robles vineyards are blessed with long summer days of intense sunshine, followed by ocean-cooled nights. The Cabernet vines are naturally stressed in the dry, often very gravelly, and sometimes lime and shale-laden soils. Water is at a premium in these vineyards, requiring the viticulturist to carefully manage pruning and irrigation. Final blend: 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, 2% Malbec, 1% Cabernet Franc. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels from coopers Berger, Marcel Cadet, Nadalié, Saint Martin, Sylvain, and Taransaud.

Red Winemaker Brenden Wood and VP Winemaking Steve Peck's notes: *"Displays trademark aromas of blackberry and blueberry compote, with violet, cracked pepper, and black tea. On the palate, shows juicy layers of currant with fine-grained tannins. The plump fruit flavors lead to a bright finish, with pastry notes from the 16 months in French cooperage. Delicious with rosemary-seasoned ribeye and garlic-roasted potatoes."*

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