

# IRONSTONE

Vineyards

## 2016 Reserve Meritage Sierra Foothills ~ Estate Grown



*In 1926, the Kautz family began farming in the Lodi region and in 1948, John Kautz Farms was founded. In 1990, after many successful years of growing wine grapes, the family completed the Ironstone Winery. The Ironstone Winery is a modern replica of an 1859 Gold Stamp Mill complete with tasting room, gourmet delicatessen, wine aging cavern, conference and wedding facilities, outdoor Amphitheatre, and 14.5 acres of landscaped gardens. The Heritage Museum and Jewelry Shoppe contains artifacts from the gold rush era, as well as the largest specimen of Crystalline Gold Leaf, a 44-lb. treasure. The family philosophy of winemaking is that quality wine grapes, a touch of artistry and patience create captivating elegant wines.*

**The Vineyards:** Located at 2400 ft. above sea level, these grapes were estate-grown at our Hay Station Ranch vineyard where warm days are cooled by the evening mountain air. This area's unique soil of decomposed granite mixed with volcanic sediment and red clay produce a wonderful mineral component. Grapes have been grown in the Sierra Foothills for 150 years.

**Sustainable Viticultural Practices:** At Ironstone, the vineyard manager, has at his disposal, a variety of sound, ecological vineyard practices which can be employed depending on what Mother Nature delivers during the growing season. We use crop reduction, leaf removal, organic materials, and drip irrigation to improve the quality and intensity of flavors. Cover crops, which attract beneficial insects, are also employed. In addition, we place owl and wood duck boxes around the vineyards and ponds helping to preserve the surrounding habitats.

**Winemaking Processes:** These fully mature grapes were picked at their peak and delivered to the winery after being selected by our Winemaker. After undergoing extended fermentation and maceration, the wine was transferred into small oak barrels and placed into our underground caverns to ensure a fuller, richer, finer wine of true varietal character. Hand blasted by local miners, many whose families came for gold in the 1800's, these caverns remain a natural 60 degrees Fahrenheit year-round temperature which slowly lowers the wine's alcohol while preserving its concentration of flavor.

**Winemaker's Notes:** For the 2016 vintage, our Winemaker chose three of the noble Bordeaux grape varieties to be a part of this magnificent blend which is an exceptionally elegant full-bodied wine. Aromas of blackberry jam, cassis and cola layered by mint and white pepper are displayed. Luscious cooked berry fruit fills the mouth with hints of vanilla and rich blackberry carries through to a smooth and well-rounded finish.

**Chef Recommends:** The French countryside, where meals are prepared with minimal fanfare, is the inspiration for pairing with Meritage. Simple foods, such as coq au vin, Roasted leg of lamb and braised beef brisket are excellent choices.

**Awards:** Mother Lode Wine Competition., July 2016

First Place (v. 2013)

Appellation: Sierra Foothills

Sub-AVA: Calaveras County

Production: 350 cases/6

Blend: 79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot 8% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec

UPC: 7 24826 01728 7

Aging: 20 months in small French & American oak Barrels

Alcohol: 14.50%, pH: 3.81

TA: 5.41 g/L

RS: 2.6 g/L

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