2016 J. LOHR ESTATES
SOUTH RIDGE SYRAH
PASO ROBLES

VINTAGE
Although rains early in the season were short of average in 2016, the timing was ideal for vine health and wine quality. Every phenological marker, including budbreak, bloom, and veraison, occurred 1 to 2 weeks earlier than normal. Syrah buds pushed in mid-March following heavy rains that fell earlier in the month. Vine canopy growth propelled through the spring and was buoyed further by light rains in April. Tannin structure was amplified by a warm veraison period beginning the third week of July, and was followed by ideal ripening weather that brought our earliest blocks of Syrah in the Estrella district to maturity by late August. In the Willow Creek district, even cooler sites that typically ripen at the end of October were picked before the end of September, at over 29° Brix. Ripe flavors abound in the 2016 vintage!

VINEYARDS
The J. Lohr Estates South Ridge Syrah is grown on a combination of lime-laden and gravelly soils, which rein in the Syrah’s rangy growth potential. Roughly 50% of this fruit was grown in the warmer Estrella and San Miguel districts, where Syrah flavors trend toward black tea and camphor. The balance is from cooler districts, including Creston, Adelaida and Willow Creek, which infuse the blend with aromatic white pepper and blue fruit notes.

WINEMAKER’S COMMENTS
Varietal aromas of black cherry, blueberry, anise and black tea are lifted by barrel aging on lees in a 60/40 blend of American and French oak barrels. A touch of floral Viognier and white pepper on the palate, with baking spice on the finish.

—Steve Peck, red winemaker

FOOD PAIRINGS
Pair with a slow-roasted pork shoulder and herbed potatoes. For simple, casual fare, try a classic BLT.