



# Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

## Metzker Family Estates | Napa Valley

The number of wine entities to bear a 'family' name has grown appreciably in the past decades since Dick Grace started the practice back in 1976 with his Grace Family Vineyards. There are presently a number of highly rated wineries such as Frank Family Vineyards, Trefethen Family Vineyards, Staglin Family Vineyard and a host of others that produce and market their products under the family marketing umbrella.

Metzker Family Estates is a relative newcomer to the lineage ranks and is definitely one of the wineries that bears watching in the coming years.

It all began in the early 1980's when owner Mike Metzker moved from his hometown of Sacramento to the Bay Area of Northern California. Metzker was a Biochemistry graduate of UC Davis, the spawning place for many noted California winemakers. While Metzker's primary interest was in chemistry, he also secured a Ph. D. in Molecular Genetics from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. In 2002, he went on to found a company, *Lasergen*, that became a leader in the field of genomics.

But, lurking in the back of his mind throughout the years was the wine industry and Mike Metzker wanted to be a part of the compelling agribusiness.

In 2013, Metzker began "seriously laying the bricks" in his words. The following year, his company produced just under 500 cases of mixed varietals under the name *Laurent* and released them in 2017.

"We located several extremely fine producers of quality fruit and entered into long-term contracts with these growers," informed Metzker. "We released the wines under the *Laurent* marque as a tribute to French winemaking and the fun associated with wine in general. However, in the coming years, most of our wines will be released under the Metzker Family Estates label."

The term 'Family' certainly applies to Metzker Family Estates. Son, Cameron Metzker, and his wife, Adrienne, are located in Napa Valley and handle the company's sales and marketing details. Daughter, Amanda, is a part-time employee and head cheerleader.

Mike Metzker's vision and foresight is what has propelled this winery startup into the upper tier of boutique wine producers. The winery is increasing its Cabernet Sauvignon presence and released a small-lot

Spring Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon last year. "With us, it's all about terroir-driven wines from really top vineyards," he went on. "As long as we have the right winemaker and the correct fruit, we should continue to be competitive at the highest level of wine production."

The 'right' winemaker for the fledgling project is fellow UC Davis alumna Melissa Apter Castro who joined the company in December of 2016. Castro's resume is already world-class. As a youth, Castro toured Northern California's wine valleys with her parents and was bitten by the wine bug. She enrolled at UC Davis in pre-med, but quickly switched to Viticulture and Enology after spending a summer in Italy.

She was awarded UC Davis' Antinori Scholarship in 2012 and spent the following year at the prestigious Tinganello Estate in Tuscany's Chianti Classico region. She was next offered a position as the first enologist at Antinori's estate winery, Antica Napa Valley, where she ultimately was named winemaker for the entity in 2015.

Along the way, Castro made the acquaintance of Cameron Metzker and was intrigued by the new brand he was promoting. She agreed to become Metzker Family Estates' winemaker and has complete charge of the company's sourcing and winemaking duties. In 2016, she was named one of 'Napa's Most Exciting Winemakers' and seems destined for a dynamic career in the California wine industry.

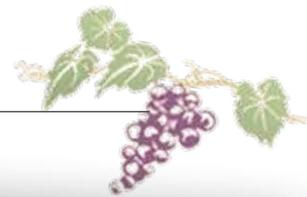
From every angle, Metzker Family Estates has checked the correct boxes to insure its continued growth and success. By purchasing high quality fruit and placing it in the hands of a gifted winemaker, the combination has already proven to be efficacious.

Owner Mike Metzker is already searching for existing vineyard property in various parts of Northern California to afford his company the opportunity of producing true 'Estate' wines in the not-too-distant future. He has assembled a team that will insure his asset to the next level.

"It's all about having the right plan in effect," he reflected. "If all the pieces fit together in complete harmony, the resultant outcome will be positive." As this month's *Platinum Wine Club* selection, we are convinced that Mike Metzker's wines have already achieved that elevated status. Enjoy!



# Metzker | 2016 Chardonnay, Ritchie Vineyard, Russian River Valley

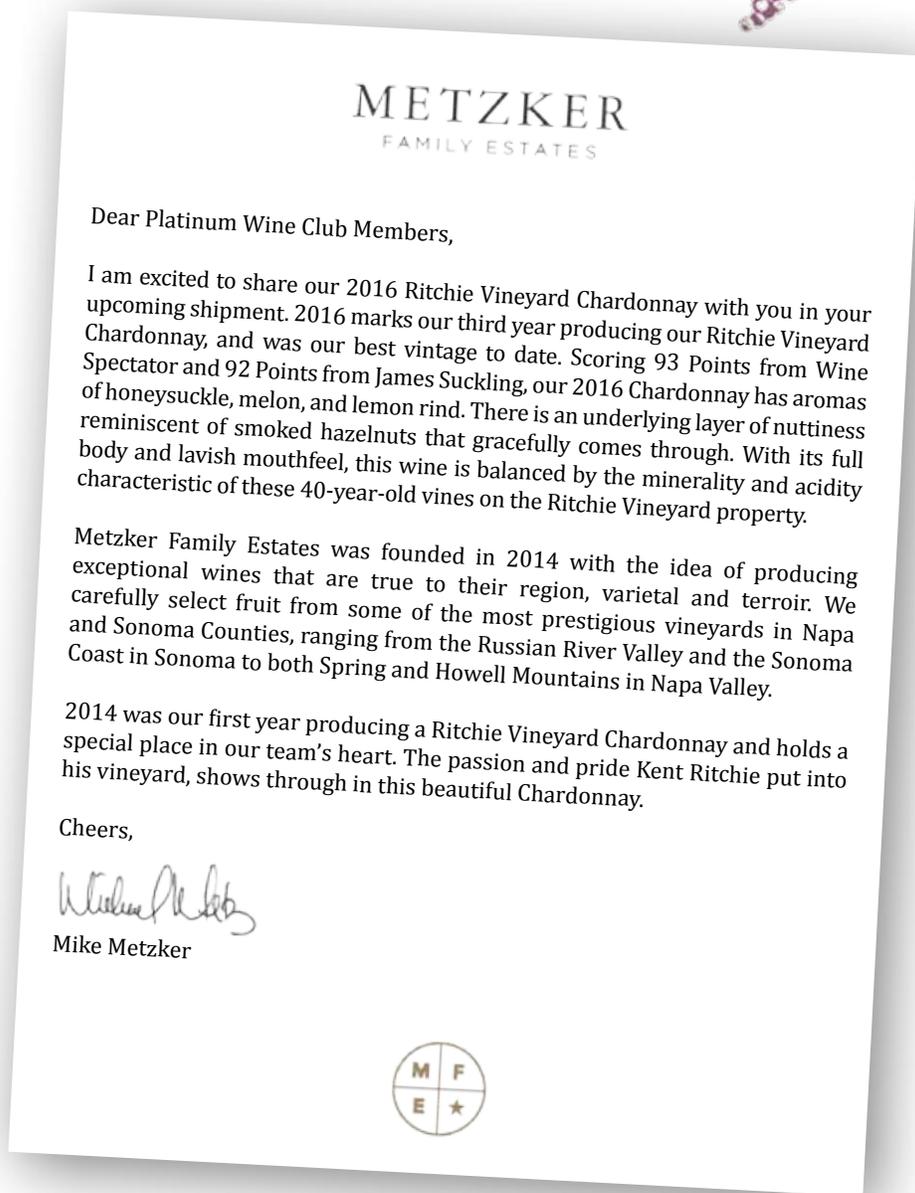


**93 POINTS**  
— *Wine Spectator*

**92 POINTS**  
— *James Suckling*

## 275 cases produced

The Metzker 2016 Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay comes from a legendary site in Sonoma's Russian River Valley, widely-regarded to be among the very best Chardonnay vineyards in California. With its beautiful old vines nestled on a rolling hillside, the Ritchie Vineyard commands respect and its wines often exhibit a rare complexity and intensity that has started a legion of loyal Ritchie followers. Metzker's 2016 vintage offers concentrated aromas of honeysuckle, melon and lemon rind and a rich, full body with notes of brioche, succulent ripe pear, apple pastry and dried apricot. The fresh minerality and acidity offer a perfect balance to the lavish mouthfeel. The long finish is loaded with hints of spice and honey. Aged 15 months in oak. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy!



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**This month's Platinum *Plus!*  
Featured Wine:**

**Maroon 2013 Reserve  
Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley**

**93 Points + Gold Medal**  
- *Tastings.com (Beverage Testing Institute)*  
**1,660 Cases Produced**



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