



Photos by Mason Trinca / Special to The Chronicle

there,” says Fore. But he saw potential.

“The terrain is markedly different up there,” he says, explaining that the high elevation delivers solar intensity, yet remains cool due to the shade of the ponderosa pine, firs and black oak trees lining the property. These cool temperatures along with the deep, well-drained volcanic soils have proved beneficial for Fore’s 17 acres of Grenache Blanc, Syrah, Mourvedre, Grenache Noir, Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon.

“We farm differently in Lake County,” says Fore. He says that during his time in Napa, he found he had to constantly trim back excess foliage to coax out the berries. On Cobb Mountain, he can let the grapes hang a little longer, letting the fruit soften. The longer hang time means higher-intensity flavors in Fore’s wines. With his plush, fruit-forward Grenache, a stingy, spice-filled Syrah and a smooth, yet tannin-rich Mourvedre it’s no wonder his GSM blend is his best seller.

**Wines to try:** 2012 Cobb Mountain Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (\$32); 2009 Carneros Late-Harvest Sauvignon Blanc (\$34)

3920 Main St., Kelseyville; (707) 245-7554; [www.forewines.com](http://www.forewines.com). Open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday-Sunday. Free

**LAUJOR ESTATE VINEYARDS**

Laujor Estate Vineyards owners Cheryl and David Lucido had longed to one day own their own vineyard. After visiting friends in Lake County, they fell in love with the serenity and bucolic beauty of the area and knew where they wanted to plant their dream. In 2004, they purchased their current 14-acre property in the Red Hills appellation of Kelseyville, and by 2006 planted their first vines, which included Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah Noir (a hybrid clone of French origin, which produces a very intense rich wine high in viscosity).

Buoyed by their grape-growing success, Cheryl tried her hand at winemaking, learning alongside another local grower. She’s since earned her enology and viticultural

certificates from UC Davis, and as of their first bottled vintage in 2009, Cheryl is Laujor Estate’s sole vintner.

When it comes to Lake County’s claim to Cab and Sauvignon Blanc, Cheryl says she loves the rusticity of her Red Hills Cabernet, but admits she isn’t usually a fan of the Sauvignon Blanc varietal; it’s “too floral and fruity” for her palate. But she’s come across an interesting variation that she’s quite fond of, Sauvignon Blanc Musque — a Sauvignon Blanc clone, mutated from the original grape, which tends to offer more musky aromas and a

creamy mouthfeel in the wines produced.

**Wines to try:** 2015 Sauvignon Blanc-Musque (\$23); 2013 Collie’s Cuvee Cabernet Sauvignon (\$34)

8664 Seigler Springs N. Road, Kelseyville; (707) 279-2146; [www.laujor-estate.com](http://www.laujor-estate.com). Open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Free

**BOATIQUE**

Just across the road from Laujor Estate is a monument to a man who has combined his two lifelong passions — boats and wine.

Napa native Bob Mount spent his summers pumping gas on the

docks of Lake Berryessa, which planted the seed of his “little boy dream to own wooden boats and a Thunderbolt car,” he says. He continued to work the docks and put himself through school, receiving his master’s in microbiology and ultimately founding Redwood Toxicology medical lab.

His professional success allowed him to amass a slew of classic and custom-built wooden boats (and the coveted Thunderbolt). He’s also the proud owner of an extensive wine collection, predominantly California Cab-based. His Santa Rosa home boasts a 4,000-bottle wine cellar.

Mount wanted to construct a separate building to showcase his expansive boat collection. Friend and boat collection caretaker Ralph Wallen pointed him in the direction of his current Red Hills property. Not only was the initial 51 acres of land affordable, but 37 of those acres were already planted to vines. It was the perfect opportunity to combine his two hobbies into one state-of-the-art facility.

Boatique opened its tasting room doors in 2015. Just a year and a half later, Mount has expanded his property to 110 acres of vines.

Mount is the first to admit he doesn’t have the strongest palate, and gives due credit to his winemaker, Luke Bass, also of Sonoma County’s Porter-Bass Winery. But he also gives credit to Lake County’s environment. “It’s the climate, soil, and elevation,” he says. “We’ve got hillsides, which are good to grow the red grapes; flatlands for the whites — there’s 3 to 4 degree temperature (difference) between the two areas and they’re less than a mile away from each other.”

**Wines to try:** 2014 Big Valley Sauvignon Blanc (\$20); 2014 Red Hills Cabernet Sauvignon (\$40)

8255 Red Hills Road, Kelseyville; (707) 270-2675; [www.boatique-wines.com](http://www.boatique-wines.com). Open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Tasting fee: \$5 (waived with bottle purchase).

Stacy Briscoe is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: [sbriscoe@sfgchronicle.com](mailto:sbriscoe@sfgchronicle.com)

Top: Chris Kelley (left) and Donna Kuckhoff of Reno and Ellie Brown and Dean Brown of Susanville try the offerings at Fore Family Vineyards in Kelseyville, located at an altitude once believed too high for growing. Above: Laujor Estate Vineyards, also in Kelseyville.

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