

CABERNET SAUVIGNON  
"RSV" SLD ESTATE  
STAGS LEAP DISTRICT  
NAPA VALLEY, 2003



ROBERT SINSKEY VINEYARDS  
RSV  
NAPA, CALIFORNIA

## BACK DOOR WINE

I wish I could say we planned it all- that we knew exactly where we were headed when we got into the wine business. The truth is, we were just unstructured enough to allow happy accidents to happen. Fortunately, as life unfolded before us, we listened to the little voice in our head that said, “this is cool, don’t mess it up!” Twenty-four years ago, we planted a vineyard with the intent to grow and sell Pinot Noir grapes. We deliberately selected the Carneros region, where the delicate Pinot Noir grapevines could thrive in the cool maritime climate. During that time, we met some folks who were building a winery up the road. One thing led

to another and we decided to become a silent partner in the project, largely motivated by the guarantee of a home for our grapes. After a few years of tremendous success, the winery ran into some management issues and sold to a larger concern. They went out owing us some money and made good on the debt by signing over the deed to a piece of land on the Silverado Trail near Yountville Cross Road. Little did we know that this jewel box of a parcel was tucked beneath the towering granite cliffs of a grape growing region that would later become known as the Stags Leap District. We walked in through the back door. *(Continued on Page 3)*



## LEAN TO THE LEFT

So, there we were, Carneros Pinot Noir growers with a winery in the as yet unnamed Stags Leap District. Fortunately, we knew enough not to impose our will and plant Pinot on the hillside, as some locals did in those days; but instead we listened to the land... and the wines of our neighbors. We tasted each and every wine made in the region. Back then, you could find Pinot Noir (not very good), Zinfandel, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Petite Sirah, Chenin Blanc, Petite Verdot, Malbec, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon growing in the immediate area. To our palates, Cabernet Sauvignon was the king.

We were discovering that the little pocket of land that landed in our lap was kind of like the Left Bank of Bordeaux. We planted most of the small hillside vineyard to Cabernet Sauvignon, a half-acre to Merlot and Cabernet Franc, and a test row each of Petite Verdot and Malbec. Through trial and error, we finally came upon an optimum ratio of 8:1; four acres of Cabernet Sauvignon to one half acre of Merlot... satisfied, we ripped out the test vineyard and the Franc. Our little four and a half acre vineyard, just out the back door of the winery, spoke to us... and we listened.



## THE PLACE IS THE PLACE

The quality and character of a wine is determined by the land, the weather, and the ability and/or willingness of the vigneron to interpret them – RSV's Stags Leap District Estate Vineyard is steeply terraced with shallow soils. The climate during growing season is warm and dry by day, cool by night. It is not uncommon for the morning fog to hug the cliffs long after it has burned off in other parts of the valley. A channel of wind pushes up from the bay moderating the temperature of the District. Relatively early bud break begins a long and gentle growing season allowing complex flavors to develop and tannins to mature, imparting a supple firmness. Cool evenings help to retain vibrant acidity and warm, but not scorching, days fully develop the intense dark fruit. RSV's SLD Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is a powerful, yet elegant expression of a special place.

## WINEGROWING NOTES



ROBERT SINSEY VINEYARDS  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON  
Stags Leap District - Napa Valley

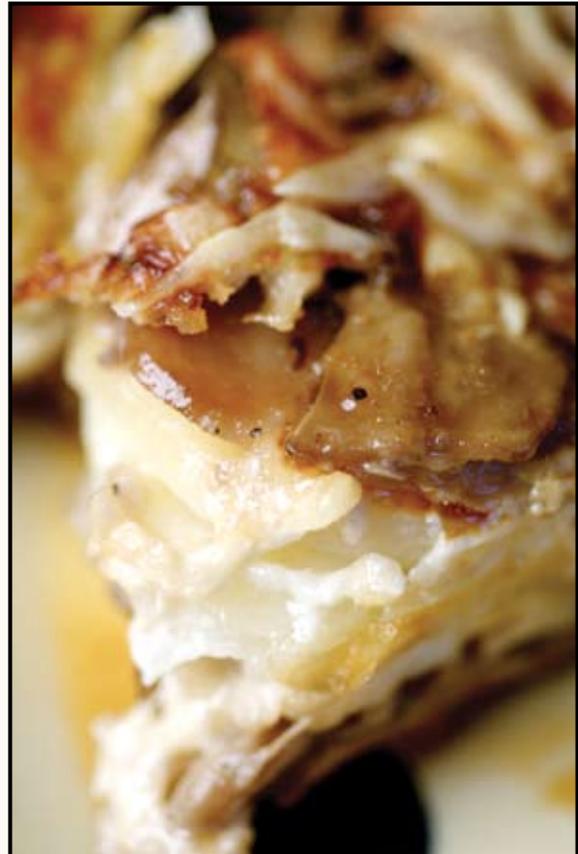
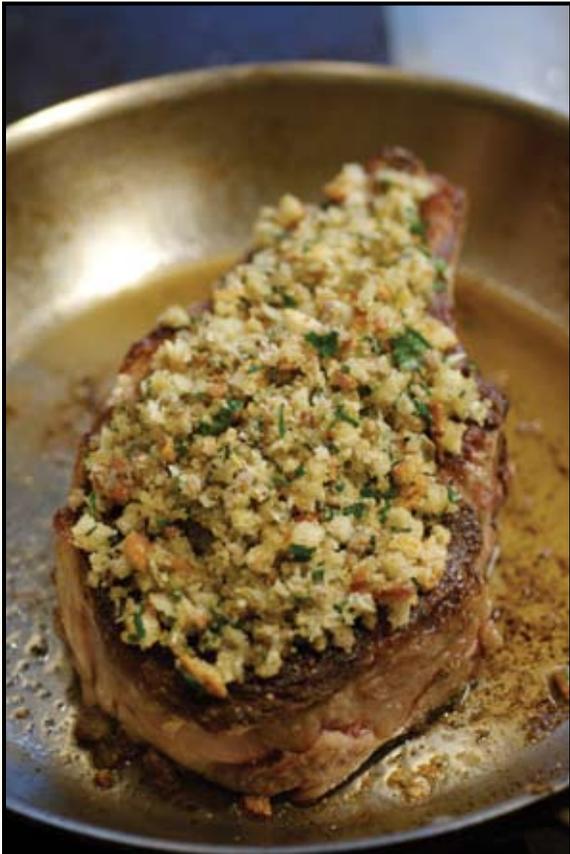
*Defined by what you can't control, refined by what you can.*

RSV's organically farmed SLD Estate Vineyard got a jump on the growing season with several heat spikes in the first quarter of 2003 that encouraged early bud break. The fast break out of the gate was tripped up by a spell of cooler weather that slowed things down and elongated the growing season. April showers hampered fruit set, naturally limiting yields. The vines, unfettered by copious amounts of fruit, concentrated their energy into fewer bunches thereby intensifying flavor. Sugar ripeness lagged behind flavor development and didn't catch up until September when a warm patch cleared the way for harvest on 9/26/03.

After crush, the wine spent thirteen days fermenting on its skins. The cellar crew cap-irrigated twice per day and performed rack and returns once per day for three days. On day number fourteen of this wine's life, it was pressed off its skins and racked into twenty-two French oak barrels, approximately 36% new, for eighteen months.

## TASTING NOTES

A visual feast of high gloss purple, so dense it first appears black, seductively draws the eye toward the glass until the olfactories take over with an aromatic explosion of black currant, plum and brooding dark cherry. Do not be deceived, this wine is decidedly more complex than a New World fruit bomb. Behind the initial dark fruit core lie aromas of tobacco and culinary herbs (bay, fennel, mint) that unmistakably define this wine as Cabernet Sauvignon. A sip wraps the palate in velvet replete with the charismatic flavors that echo the scent divined by the nose. Supple tannins and vibrant acidity provide a solid framework for the generous fruit and ensures the wine's longevity and affinity for the dinner table.



# HAPPY, HAPPY, JOY, JOY



My eyes bugged out after tasting the SLD Cabernet Sauvignon with this thick, juicy chop. Why? The crust, with its hint of anchovy and salty Parmesan, made the wine taste like ripe plum and dark cherries – very dark. A curious pairing, but it worked to prove that fish goes with red wine – especially when supported by over two pounds of medium rare beef! The balanced acidity of this voluptuous Cabernet cut beautifully through the rich fat of the meat. I was quite satisfied. The mushroom potato gratin makes a nice side for the beef but will also serve well as a main course for those who eschew red meat.

Until the next wine...

Maria



## OVEN-ROASTED RIB CHOP WITH AN HERBED PARMESAN BREADCRUMB CRUST

Serves 2 to 4

<i>2 ½ pound standing rib roast chop, 1 bone, 2 ¼-inches-thick</i>	<i>2 anchovy filets, minced</i>
<i>2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil</i>	<i>¼ teaspoon minced lemon zest, no white pith</i>
<i>Salt</i>	<i>1 tablespoon chopped capers</i>
<i>Freshly ground black pepper</i>	<i>1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil</i>
<i>¼ cup coarsely ground fresh breadcrumbs</i>	<i>1 tablespoon chopped flat leaf parsley</i>
<i>3 tablespoons shredded Reggiano Parmesan</i>	

1. Remove the chop from the refrigerator 30 minutes before cooking. Rub with extra virgin olive oil and season it well with salt and pepper. Place the chop on a plate while you mix the breadcrumbs.
2. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
3. In a small bowl, mix together the breadcrumbs through the parsley. Season with a few grinds of pepper and a bit of salt if necessary.
4. Heat a large sauté pan over medium high heat and add the chop. Brown 5 minutes on each side, draining the fat from the pan as it accumulates. After browning the second side, turn the chop over and top with the breadcrumb mixture, patting it over the chop evenly.
5. Place the pan in the preheated oven and roast the chop for 20 to 25 minutes for medium rare. Remove the chop from the pan and let it rest for 15 minutes before slicing. Serve with the Potato Mushroom gratin or the side of your choice.

## POTATO MUSHROOM GRATIN

Serves 6 to 8

<i>4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened</i>	<i>2 teaspoons minced garlic</i>	<i>2 pounds large Yukon gold potatoes, peeled</i>
<i>½ medium yellow onion, chopped finely</i>	<i>2 teaspoons chopped thyme leaves</i>	<i>4 tablespoons melted unsalted butter</i>
<i>1 pound crimini mushrooms, washed &amp; thinly sliced</i>	<i>Salt</i>	<i>2 cups shredded Fontina, Carmody or other mild semi-soft cheese</i>
<i>½ pound wild mushrooms, cleaned &amp; coarsely chopped</i>	<i>Freshly ground black pepper</i>	<i>2 cups heavy cream</i>

1. Butter a deep 2-quart baking dish well and reserve.
2. Heat 4 tablespoons of butter in a large sauté pan over medium high heat. When the butter begins to brown, add the onion and sauté it for 2 to 3 minutes until it is tender and beginning to brown. Add all of the mushrooms, garlic and thyme.
3. Sauté the mushrooms until they begin to caramelize and the juices are dry in the pan, about 7 to 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spread to cool on a sheet pan and reserve at room temperature for up to one hour or overnight in the refrigerator.
4. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
5. Thinly slice the potatoes into a large bowl using a mandolin or a sharp knife. Season the slices with salt and pepper and toss them with the melted butter. Layer 1/3 of the potato slices evenly in the bottom of the pan. Spread 1/3 of the mushrooms over the potatoes and sprinkle 1/3 of the cheese on top of the mushrooms. Pour over 1/3 of the cream. Repeat the process twice until the dish is full.
6. Place the gratin-filled baking dish on a sheet pan and then in the preheated oven. Bake for 15 minutes then reduce the heat to 350 degrees F and continue to bake until the potatoes are tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Don't be alarmed if the dish bubbles over. The high fat content of the cream will keep it from adhering to the pan.
7. Let the gratin rest for 15 minutes before serving.

Note: This recipe can be halved or quartered to fit smaller baking dishes. Make only two layers if using a smaller dish.

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