

SLD



CABERNET SAUVIGNON, SLD ESTATE, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT, NAPA VALLEY, 2011

Grown, Produced, and Bottled by Robert Sinskey Vineyards



- A “Left Bank” of Napa wine
- Grown in RSV’s SLD Estate Vineyard in the Stags Leap District of Napa Valley
- CCOF Organic and Demeter Biodynamic certified vineyards
- Cave aged 2 years in 35% new French oak barrels
- Bottle aged an additional 2+ years in the RSV cellar before release
- The equivalent of 270 cases produced in 6x750ml packs
- Bottled in 750ml, 1.5L, 3L, and 6L

WINE GROWING NOTES

The 2011 vintage on RSV’s organically farmed SLD Estate Vineyard survived a drought year only to be hit by rain during spring flowering, resulting in one of the smallest sets in our history. Almost dry farmed, the four acres of Cabernet Sauvignon and half acre of Merlot produced tiny clusters of grapes with thicker than average skins.

The vintage was long and cool, but otherwise uneventful in RSV’s Stags Leap District Estate Vineyard. The season allowed full flavor development as the grapes benefitted from a long hang time in the cool weather. The fruit ripened evenly, yet maintained good, mouth watering acidity balanced by mature tannins.

The grapes were harvested in the early morning, de-stemmed, and allowed to ferment on the native yeast. Once dry, the wine was put down to small French oak barrels (40% new) for almost two years before bottling.

WINE TASTING NOTES

The wine is visually impressive with a deep, almost opaque, purple hue. Aromas and flavors of blackberry, cassis, and violet are offset by cool dried herb notes of thyme, pepper, green olive, and leathery tea. Deep, dark, and brooding, this wine needs some air to show its full potential. Firm, dusty, ripe tannins balanced by vibrant acidity provide balance and the suggestion that this wine will age gracefully for decades to come.



FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

6320 Silverado Trail | Napa, CA 94558 | 707.944.9090 | RobertSinskey.com

restaurantretail@robertsinskey.com distributorsales@robertsinskey.com consumer@robertsinskey.com

Cabernet then and now!

The eight lane urban freeway shed lanes in pairs as it slimmed into a two lane ribbon of rural highway. Pasture, dotted with cattle and sheep, gave way to repetitive rows of vines as I navigated my 70's vintage "Disco Peugeot" station wagon over the Napa County line. It was sometime in the early eighties and I was armed with a Rolleiflex, a Nikon, a sleeping bag, and an idea to document the fall harvest at Acacia winery.

In those days, Acacia was a storied winery with vineyard-designated Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays considered by many to be some of the best "Burgundian" styled wines of the New World. My father had recently purchased his first vineyard land in the Carneros region of Napa and become a limited partner in the Acacia project with the hope that they would create a "Sinskey Vineyard" designated wine from his grapes.

I will never forget the smell permeating the cold, crisp air as I drove up - a combination of damp leaves and fermenting grapes, a musty earthiness lifted by the heady aromas as grapes transformed into wine mixed with wafts of vinegar from the pile of discards.

The Acacia project was on a roll and in expansion mode. They had acquired a piece of land in an area known as The Stags Leap region of Napa (AVA's did not yet exist) to be the "Bordeaux" counterpoint to the "Burgundian" Carneros project and hired Joe Cafaro as the winemaker. Since no winery yet existed on that property, Joe made Bordeaux varietal wines at Acacia from purchased grapes.

I had the good fortune to shadow a group of talented wine makers for a few weeks during my impressionable indoctrination. Mike Richmond oversaw the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir program and Joe made the Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Sauvignon Blanc wines.

They allowed me to sit in on tastings and genuinely seemed to enjoy my naiveté expressed through unjaded, unfettered opinions. Maybe it was the times or maybe it was their personality, but Mike and Joe were classicists. Elegance, finesse, balance, and age-worthiness was what they talked and cared about.

What I find fascinating today is that few of those wines, other than the occasional Zinfandel, were over 14% alcohol. Most landed somewhere between 12.2% and 13.6% - low when compared to "modern" wines.

Joe Cafaro once told me, "If you're surly when you're young, you're going to be surly when you're old." This little bit of folk wisdom stayed with me as I watched styles come and go - from "old school" balanced wines with moderate alcohols to bracingly tannic wines, to ripe, sweet, high alcohol wines, to underripe searingly acidic wines. Elegant balanced wines may go out of fashion for a time, but they never go out of style.

We've experienced a few recent vintages that remind me of the old days. Though we at RSV have never veered from our mission to grow and make elegant, balanced, age-worthy, cuisine-oriented wines, some vintages are just more conducive than others... and a nice, long cool vintage like we had in 2011 just about assures it.

My "Disco Peugeot" broke down on the last day of that pivotal trip... perhaps the French car gods were sending me a not so subtle message to stay put. Though it was the beginning of the end for that car, it was the beginning of a new direction for me, rich in early lessons that live on in our wines to this day.