

SLD

CABERNET SAUVIGNON, SLD ESTATE
STAGS LEAP DISTRICT, NAPA VALLEY 2012
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 Certified Organic Vineyards
- Cave aged 2 years in 35% new French oak barrels
- Bottle aged an additional 2+ years in the RSV cellar before release
- Bottled in 750ml, 1.5L, 3L, and 6L

Winegrowing Notes

RSV’s SLD Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is an elegant beast. It is dense with perfectly ripened tannin, bright, mouth-watering crispness, black stone fruit and an undercurrent of pyrazine compounds for a unique, savory, herbaceous character that is distinct to Cabernet Sauvignon picked at optimum (not over) ripeness.

Steeply terraced, RSV’s organically farmed SLD Estate Vineyard is just four and a half acres of shy-producing vines; each vine carrying only a few clusters of intensely flavored grapes. This vineyard yields the fewest tons per acre (2012 was considered a large crop at just two tons per acre) of any of RSV’s properties. The Stags Leap District is ideal for creating a classic style of wine. The amphitheater-like vineyard hugs the base of the mountain and rises up from the valley floor, capturing early morning fog and reflecting heat off the stony precipice in the afternoon. Lean, volcanic soils keep the vines in a state of stress that concentrates energy on the grapes instead of big leafy canopies. This idyllic combination of micro-climate, exposure and soil helps to create Cabernet Sauvignon that is elegant, balanced, full-flavored and age worthy.

Tasting Notes

RSV’s Stags Leap District Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is a 2012 release worth the wait! This one’s a firm handshake with a first impression of wisdom beyond its years. An aromatic greeting of boysenberry, cassis, spice, bay laurel and cocoa bean is backed by complex notes of leather, graphite and earth. After five minutes or so come hints of cherry and strawberry. The wine suggests old world complexity endowed with new world richness. It is both delicate and powerful with a brightness on the palate that balances the firm tannins and the weightiness of a perfectly ripened Cabernet from the SLD. A splash in the decanter while the wine is young will make it a great dinner companion or, for those with patience, a candidate to lose in the cellar for a few years... or decades! Patience will be rewarded as the wine evolves into an elegantly complex, supple and delicious beverage. Just 1,457 six-bottle cases were produced.

FINE WINES. ORGANIC VINES.

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Reflections on Old School Cabernet

"Damn, that's good!" - I just couldn't contain my enthusiasm as the 1973 Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon slipped past my lips. My father stashed that bottle at release to enjoy at a future occasion that never came. Now he is gone - without knowing how the wine evolved or how his cache of old California wine brings us pleasure. I am not going to make the same mistake. I plan to enjoy as many old wines as I can before my time is up.

The occasion was a gathering of tribes the day after the presidential election. Our UK importer, Pol Roger, was in town. They invited several wineries they represent to have dinner with us at RSV. Each guest was instructed to bring a special bottle of wine - something with personal meaning.

The Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon was special for many reasons. Not only did it come from my father's cellar, it was one of the first wine brands I had the pleasure of tasting as an underaged imbibor. The wine, in its youth, was rustic and full bodied with firm tannin. It had an intriguing herbaceous quality with a savoriness that after a splash in a decanter, paired well with the meat-centric dishes of the day. Decades later, the fully mature wine showed bone dry with no perceptible sweetness and it kept opening throughout the course of the meal. Its very structure not only allowed the wine to evolve as we enjoyed it, it is what allowed the wine to last for forty three years, improving, mellowing and becoming more complex with age.

The wine was also particularly special to RSV winemaker Jeff Virnig. It was after tasting the 1973 Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon that he became inspired to pursue a life in wine. These early wines imprinted their style and structure upon us. Many modern wines are picked at higher sugar (some would say over ripe) to create wines with high alcohol and a sweet, dramatic first impression. However, many don't seem to evolve as gracefully. The old school wines, with their subtle elegance, moderate alcohol, firm tannin and vibrant mouthfeel are reminiscent of a certain RSV wine - like the SLD Estate Cabernet Sauvignon.

RSV is not trying to emulate the old California style; rather, those wines, along with many classic Old World wines, are benchmarks. They have been etched in our taste memory and are the reason we love growing and making wine. It requires discipline to avoid manipulative techniques that might make the wine more commercially acceptable in the short term but compromise the wine's sense of place, aging and evolutionary potential over the long haul. It is critical to know what came before to know where you want to go.

SAUCED! by Maria Helm Sinskey

Sauce-making has become a lost art. A great sauce derives its richness, complexity and depth of flavor from the alcohol, aromatic herbs, and vegetables added during the reduction phase of cooking. A knob of butter added at the end provides a luxurious texture and glistening gilded appearance. Spoon silky sauce over perfectly cooked, fowl, fish or meat as the crowning touch. A spoonful of a well-prepared sauce is the "coup de grâce" that declares a dish complete.

The SLD Cabernet Sauvignon with its finely tuned balance of cassis, black stone fruit, fresh acidity and supple, ripe tannin is an elegant companion to a fine guinea hen with silky sauce spooned over it. Most people think Napa Cabernet Sauvignon should be served with a thick, sauceless steak. Though a perfectly cooked steak might suit the SLD Cabernet Sauvignon just fine, the elegance and subtlety of this wine makes it a beautiful companion to well-sauced birds - duck, guinea hen, pheasant and squab... dishes normally considered companions to Pinot Noir. Open up a bottle of this Cabernet Sauvignon with your next saucy bird and let it take flight.

Visit www.robertsinskey.com/kitchen for the *Guinea Hen with Savory Cabbage Purses* recipe and other tempting originals by Maria Helm Sinskey.

