



**STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS  
1996 FAY VINEYARD  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

**Vineyard** ~ FAY vineyard lies directly below the crown of the Stags Leap palisades and borders S.L.V., our estate vineyard that produced the famed 1976 Paris Tasting winner. It was the taste of Nathan Fay's 1968 Cabernet that led the to search for vineyard land in the area. Purchased in 1986, FAY Vineyard soils are in separate parts rocky, volcanic and alluvial, producing perfumy, voluptuous fruit characteristics with with tenderly honed tannins.

**Vintage** ~ The 1996 harvest tested the winemakers' skills and was a vivid illustration of the adage "winemaking starts in the vineyard." It was human intervention more than natural dispensation that produced great wines in 1996. Another year of above-average rainfall, the 1995/1996 winter was also comparatively warm. An already small crop was further reduced by spring showers. The summer was punctuated by several heat spells and, in spite of the already reduced crop, we dropped more fruit to enhance fruit uniformity. This was the kind of harvest during which each berry was cherished and coaxed to relative perfection in spite of nature's caprice through trials of water and fire. As harvest approached respite was provided by more moderate temperatures which helped with the retention of fruit acidity. The tiny berries were jewel-like, highly concentrated in fruit character and complexity. The small harvest did not allow for a Cask 23 bottling, especially after determining that the usual lots that make up Cask 23 produced a different stylistic expression from previous Cask 23 wines. These lots were added back to the S.L.V. and FAY wines for increased complexity in both.

**Wine** ~ *In the nose, the wine is like a lush garden scented by ripe berry, cassis and crushed violets. A honeyed texture luxuriously flavored by currant and black cherry is embroidered by French oak accents. Flavors recede slowly over a framework of gentle tannins. This is the wine to accompany grilled rib-eye steaks served in Cabernet butter or a Gruyère and herb soufflé.*

Harvest Dates ~ September 1–October 2  
Harvest Brix ~ 24.3°(average)  
Acid ~ 0.62g/100ml  
pH ~ 3.61  
Blend ~ 99.7% Cabernet Sauvignon  
.2% Petite Verdot, .1% Merlot

Barrel Aging ~ 24 months French oak  
Appellation ~ 100% Napa Valley  
Release Date ~ September 1, 1999  
Suggested California Retail Price ~ \$100.00

Michael Silacci  
Winemaker

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