



## STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS 1999 S.L.V.

**Vineyard** ~ The 1999 vintage is one of the smallest in the last 20 years, for it marks the beginning of the rejuvenation of our original estate vineyard. First planted in 1970, by the late 1990s S.L.V. had passed middle age, and vine disease and diminished vigor were beginning to take a toll. Beginning in 1999 we started a multi-year program of replanting partial blocks of the vineyard. In our replanting program, the wheel has come full circle. When we purchased the FAY Vineyard from grapegrowing pioneer Nathan Fay in 1986, much of our viticultural experience up to that point, as well as the clonal budwood, were taken from S.L.V. and applied to the renovation of FAY. Now we are taking the winegrowing knowledge, viticultural advancements, and clonal material that proved most successful during the FAY replanting and applying them to S.L.V. It will take several years for that process to be completed and for S.L.V. to return to full strength. Until that time, we are devoting extra man-hours to nurturing and harvesting grapes that meet the standards of the S.L.V. label and declassifying much of the fruit to other Cabernet programs. However, we have high expectations that S.L.V. will soon return to full vitality, after all, the 1973 S.L.V. that emerged victorious at the famous Paris Tasting of 1976 was made when the vineyard was just three years old.

**Vintage** ~ Delayed vine development initiated by a cool spring continued throughout the summer and through the second week of September. Then storm clouds arrived to stir things up a bit. After ominous rolls of thunder, the clouds delivered only a light dusting of rain and then peeled away. Temperatures increased steadily, sometimes breaking the 100 Fahrenheit barrier. As the vine leaves folded away from the sun, they pulled water out of the berries, concentrating sugar and acid – but full flavor had not yet been achieved. Careful maintenance and irrigation nursed the clusters along to physiological ripeness, and acid levels held, supporting fruit and texture. Our vine-by-vine harvesting methods ensured that fruit was picked only when it was completely ready.

**Wine** ~ *The soils of S.L.V. are a mix of rich waterborne alluvial elements and volcanic earth, but in the wines the "fire" qualities contributed by the volcanic soils – intensity, depth and classic structure – predominate. Nevertheless, "water" characteristics are evident in the wine's voluptuous perfume and fruit flavors, achieving a harmonious balance. The 1999 vintage offers aromas of raspberries and plums, evolving into rosemary, allspice, and rosewater, before the mouth is seduced by a bounty of cherries, raspberries, and cassis. Yet the fruit is nestled amid fragrant star anise and cedar, underlining the elegant balance of fire and water. The finish recedes slowly, revealing the finely grained acidity for which S.L.V. is famous. Evolution in the glass is gradual, and soon the palate is tempted to take another taste. Serve with pork tenderloin, pan-seared and then roasted with apples and fresh garden herbs, or a creamy ragout of wild mushrooms over homemade fettuccini.*

**Harvest Dates** ~ October 3 – October 25  
**Harvest Brix** ~ 24.6° (weighted average)  
**Appellation** ~ 100% Stags Leap District  
**Blend** ~ 100% Cabernet Sauvignon  
**Titrateable Acid** ~ 0.56g/100ml

**Barrel Aging** ~ 18 months French oak  
**pH** ~ 3.71  
**Total Cases** ~ 998 cases  
**Release Date** ~ October 1, 2002