



STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS
2000 S.L.V.

Vineyards ~ "You cannot step twice into the same river," said Heraclitus, "for other waters and yet others go ever flowing on." A vineyard is likewise far from static, for its survival requires continuous renewal through the actions of both nature and man. S.L.V. was first planted in 1970, and the vineyard quickly showed its quality when the 1973 S.L.V. Cabernet Sauvignon won the famous Paris tasting in 1976. But even a great vineyard under the most careful management isn't immune from the effects of time. By the late 1990s S.L.V. had passed middle age, and disease and diminished vigor were affecting more and more of the vines. We began to replant, block by block, using many of the lessons we learned during the replanting and renovation of our neighboring estate vineyard, FAY, and much of the same clonal budwood as well. At the time of the 2000 harvest, almost half of S.L.V. was either fallow or very young. Maintaining the character and quality for which S.L.V. is famous therefore required even greater use of labor-intensive handwork and a significant sacrifice of volume. As a result, this is one of the smallest vintages of S.L.V. in the last decade.

Vintage ~ Late spring rains and two early periods of warm weather caused some crop loss, which allowed the vines to focus their energies on the remaining fruit, resulting in added complexity. Summer temperatures were uniform and moderate, without periods of excessive heat or unseasonable coolness, allowing for the steady progression of grape ripening. Initially, mild fall days built a foundation of good acidity. Scattered showers at harvest made selective picking necessary as we waited for the full development of fruit flavor and physiological ripeness. A short period of late-season heat completed maturation without dulling acidity.

Wine ~ During this wine's youth, we suggest coaxing its aromatics and flavors to the fore by gently swirling it in the glass, to increase the exposure to oxygen. Swirl and then savor the welcoming scents of dried rose petals, smoke, and sandalwood, followed by hints of green olive, date, black pepper, and cedar. This rich array is echoed in the mouth, which fills with flavors of vanilla, olives, sandalwood, and black cherry. The wine's complexity continues to unfold as the finish slowly, gracefully recedes. Time will take this wondrous wine to even greater heights. For now, pair it with penne tossed with roasted eggplant and late summer heirloom tomatoes, generously topped with shaved Parmesan cheese, or a skirt steak marinated in garlic-spiked olive oil, then grilled over wood.

Harvest Dates – September 23 – October 8
Harvest Brix – 24.2° (weighted average)
Titrateable Acidity – 0.59g/100ml
pH – 3.67
Fermentation – 100% stainless steel
Alcohol – 14.0%

Blend – 96% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot
Appellation – 100% Stags Leap District
Barrel Aging – 22 months, all French oak
Malolactic Fermentation – 100%
Production – 1,655 cases