

STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS

2008 CASK 23 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The story of CASK 23 began during the harvest of 1974. Back then, winery founder Warren Winiarski enlisted the help of celebrated winemaker André Tchelistcheff. As they tasted through various lots of new wines from that year, one lot of wine from S.L.V. was so deliciously distinct that they decided it should be bottled separately. It was named CASK 23 for the large wooden cask in which it was aged. Today, the wine is a blend of the most distinctive fruit from the S.L.V. and FAY vineyards and has become one of the most highly regarded and collected wines worldwide.

VINEYARDS & WINEMAKING

CASK 23 is a tale of two vineyards that come together in a harmonious blend. A significant portion of the grapes that went into the 2008 blend were grown in our FAY vineyard, while the balance of the blend was derived from select areas in S.L.V. Specific blocks within these adjoining ranches provide distinct attributes to the wine. Vines planted in volcanic soils on the eastern hillsides of S.L.V. and FAY give CASK 23 its structure, concentration, spicy intensity and elegant tannins; those grown in the alluvial soils in the middle and lower sections of the two vineyards add vibrant fruit flavors, a supple mid-palate, and perfumed aromatics. Each lot was vinified and aged separately in small French oak barrels for 24 months, allowing the characteristics of each block to develop, while adding subtle spice notes. In the latter stages of aging, the lots were blended, becoming one in CASK 23.

VINTAGE

The 2008 growing season was like a scary movie with a happy ending. A hard frost in April and a heat spike in May during bloom greatly reduced vineyard yields. The frost – the worst in the memories of many Napa Valley vintners – had us up for 22-plus nights, monitoring our frost protection needs. Another heat spike in the first week of September caused concern, yet Mother Nature provided a reprieve and gave us a cool, calm harvest the rest of the way. Although yields were lower than normal due to poor bloom and set, the concentration and flavor development in the grapes was outstanding, and we made beautiful wines despite the challenges.

WINE

The 2008 CASK 23 combines the signature perfume notes of FAY vineyard with the structure and hints of minerality of S.L.V. The nose begins with enticing aromas of violets, dark berries, fresh grated nutmeg and mocha mint that lead to a luscious palate. Vibrant blackberry and black cherry flavors mingle with hints of cola, espresso and dark chocolate. Bright and lively, this Cabernet has great fruit density and a silky texture. Serve CASK 23 with espresso rubbed prime rib or peppercorn-encrusted and lightly-seared Ahi tuna.



HARVEST DATES: Sept. 4 – Oct. 7, 2008

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

pH: 3.77

TITRATABLE ACIDITY: 0.56g/100ml

FERMENTATION: 100% stainless steel tank

MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION: 100%

BARREL AGING: 24 months
100% new French oak

BLEND: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

APPELLATION: Napa Valley (100% estate)

RELEASE DATE: Fall 2011

Nicki Pruss
Winemaker