



STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS
1998 FAY
CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Vineyard ~ FAY Vineyard lies directly below the Stags Leap palisades. Planted by Nathan Fay in 1961, this was the first vineyard planted to Cabernet Sauvignon in what is known today as Stags Leap District. After tasting Nathan Fay's 1968 Cabernet, we searched for vineyard land in the area, leading to the establishment of S.L.V. in 1970. This estate vineyard produced the famed 1976 Paris Tasting winner and borders FAY. When we purchased the FAY Vineyard in 1986, much of the vineyard required replanting due to advanced age. FAY Vineyard soils are rocky, volcanic and alluvial, with greater variation than those found in S.L.V. The viticultural methods applied vary with the different sections. The newest viticultural practices have guided us in our replanting from roots to canopy management. As the vineyard begins its growing season, we farm vine-by-vine, training each according to its strengths and weaknesses with an eye to distributing vine energy equally through the shoots. As shoot growth becomes more uniform, we change our focus to the evolving fruit. By continually adjusting number of leaves and formation of clusters, we maximize uniform fruit ripening. As harvest approaches, we are farming cluster-by-cluster, making sure that each is in the best condition to achieve the highest expression of ripe fruit flavors.

Vintage ~ The transition year from El Niño to La Niña was marked by heavy rainfall. A spring that never was evolved into a summer that almost never was, bringing us to a harvest that finally was. Cool spring showers set a moderate crop which was to help in flavor development later on. Aside from one heat spike, the summer was cooler than normal. It was a year that tested winemakers' resolve not to panic in anticipation of autumn rains. Fruit that had achieved sugar ripeness was left on the vine, allowing for the development of full fruit maturity. Two storm systems gave us little more than a light misting of moisture, leaving unaffected hardier varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Brilliantly clear days of moderate heat followed, turning berry skins uniformly black with concentrated richness.

Wine ~ *As the vines in this vineyard mature, the greatness in the land translates itself to the fruit in glorious fashion. This is a wine to drink while listening to Puccini's La Bohème. Luminous ripe berry perfumes seem to bloom in the glass; lush boysenberry, raspberry and dried violet notes become part of a chorus that sings seductively of Cabernet Sauvignon. A satiny core of ripe cherry on the palate has a textured finish that echoes of black truffle and allspice. Marry this wine with duckling dressed in a reduced duck stock featuring black cherries or ragout of winter vegetables topped with mashed potatoes.*

Harvest Dates ~ September 29–October 23
Harvest Brix ~ 23.6° (average)
Titratable Acid ~ 0.57g/100ml
pH ~ 3.62
Blend ~ 96.9% Cabernet Sauvignon,
3.1% Merlot

Barrel Aging ~ 21 months French oak
Appellation ~ 100% Napa Valley Release
Date ~ September 1, 2001