



STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS
2003 CASK 23
CABERNET SAUVIGNON

CASK 23, made only in exceptional vintages, is usually a blend of the most distinctive fruit from our S.L.V. and FAY estate vineyards. But now, thirty years after a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon from S.L.V. won the legendary Paris tasting, we return to this vineyard as the sole source of inspiration for the 2003 blend.

Vineyards & Winemaking ~ The story of CASK 23 began during the harvest of 1974. Back then, in the winery's first years, we enlisted the help of celebrated winemaker André Tchelistcheff. As they tasted through various lots of new wines from that year, they noticed a distinct character in a lot from the center of Block 4, a character they described as "crushed violets". It was so appealing that they decided to age this wine separately. After aging in a wooden cask, number 23, the wine was still so deliciously distinct, we decided to bottle it separately after further aging in barrel, and give it a special name—CASK 23. Much of S.L.V. has been replanted, but the vines in Block 4 from the original planting in 1970 still stand, and they continue to produce fruit of exquisite character. And so, with this release, the story of CASK 23 circles back to its original roots, with a focus on S.L.V. and the center of Block 4.

Vintage ~ The 2003 vintage started out as one of the more challenging in recent memory. High temperatures in early spring, followed by one of the rainiest Aprils in history, disturbed many vines' ability to set fruit. Temperatures stayed low throughout much of the summer, and for a while it appeared that harvest would be much later than normal. Warm weather in September helped bring the grapes to full maturity, resulting in excellent quality of fruit.

Wine ~ The 2003 CASK 23 is a wine of rich flavors and luscious, supple tannins. It opens with welcoming aromas of savory spices that marry with floral notes and sweet dark fruit. These aromas evolve into warm scents of vanilla, espresso, and truffle with more time in the glass. This beautiful array is echoed on the palate with deep flavors of dark berries, cherries, and plums that combine with chocolate, espresso, and spicy notes. The wine's complexity continues to unfold throughout a long, persistent finish.

Harvest Dates – September 21- October 27
Alcohol – 14.2%
Titrateable Acidity – 0.57g/100ml
pH – 3.69

Blend – 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Barrel Aging – 27 months in French Oak
Appellation – 100% Stags Leap District
Release Date – November 1, 2006
Suggested Retail – \$175 per bottle

Nicki Pruss
Winemaker