

# BEST WINERIES



## Stags Leap District's Vineyard to Vintner Event

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By Jennifer Boden

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**April 28th-30th! Jam-packed weekend featuring dinners, wine tastings, workshops and more.**

If the thought of exploring, savoring and increasing your knowledge about wine sounds tempting, then look no further than the annual Vineyard to Vintner event in Napa Valley.

Immerse yourself in Stags Leap District's iconic wineries, with a chance to get up

close and personal with vintners and winemakers who will be sharing their stories.

Whether sipping on fine wines or soaking in sweeping valley views, there's something truly special about exploring one of wine country's tightest knit appellations.

We interview Nancy Bialek, Executive Director of the Stags Leap District to learn more.

## **Why is this event so exciting for wine enthusiasts and collectors?**

**Nancy Bialek, Executive Director of the Stags Leap District:** This annual event takes place April 28th-30th and offers a glimpse into our small yet vibrant winemaking community. Vintner to Vineyard is limited to only 200 guests, so it's tremendously personal, and many of the experiences that we create don't happen any other time.

Plus, many of the wineries that open their doors during this time are usually not open to the public. So you really get a peek behind the scenes.



Guests enjoying wine tasting workshop at Vineyard to Vintner event. Photo Courtesy: Bob McClenahan.

## **Share details about this year's vintner dinners.**

**Nancy Bialek:** The Vintner-Hosted Dinners are at several wineries in the appellation, who have invited a chef or restaurant team to come in and prepare top notch cuisine to pair with very limited library wines. Chefs from Charter Oak, Southside Napa, Moss & Vine, Bottega and La Toque are all involved this year, and each dinner is limited to just 40 guests. I'm excited about all of them.

A Live Fire Under the Palisades will take place at Steltzner Vineyards, with Morgan and Irma Robinson of Southside Napa cooking a wood-fired meal over barrel staves.



Elegant Vintner dinner. Photo Courtesy: Sarah Risk.

A four-course dinner at Stags' Leap Winery's historic Manor House will feature library selections from Stags' Leap, Regusci Winery and Shafer Vineyards. A multi-course meal from La Toque Chef Ken Frank is happening at Pine Ridge, in the underground caves, with stargazing built into the evening's activities.

Juan Carlos and Victoria Acosta of Moss & Vine will be cooking at Cliff Lede, well-known for its embrace of classic wines and classic rock.



Impressive vintner dinner at Cliff Lede Vineyards. Photo by Bob McClenahan.

And at Chimney Rock, which is co-hosting with Baldacci Family Vineyard and Malk Family Vineyards, three-star Michelin Chef Christopher Kostow's team oversees the menu.

## **Event highlights guests will enjoy this year include:**

- **Friday, April 28th: Vintner-hosted Library Wine Dinners**

With five incredible venues to choose from, (see vintner dinner list above) guests will enjoy a delightful and delicious evening.

- **Saturday, April 29th: Digging Deeper**

These are sessions hosted by vintners at four different venues that will immerse guests deeper into the vineyards and history of the appellation, with plenty of rare and

special wines along the way.



The Digging Deeper events offer rare opportunity to gain insight into the Stags Leap District. Photo Courtesy: Sarah Risk.

- **Saturday, April 29th: Grand Vintner-Hosted Lunch and Tasting**

During their main event, Regusci Winery is rolling out the red carpet for winemakers from Stags Leap District! Get ready to explore their organic garden and sample wines, all in one place.

Guests will taste from a generous selections of wines and enjoy lunch from several live fire cooking stations, prepared by award-winning Chef Stephen Barber of Farmstead Restaurant at Long Meadow Ranch. Woodhouse Chocolates will also be on hand to sweeten the day.



Grand Vintner-Hosted Lunch and Tasting. Photo Courtesy: Robert Bruno.

- **Sunday, April 30th – Savor Sunday: Vintner-Hosted Winery Experiences**

Get ready to indulge in a day of sipping and savoring! Multiple venues will be hosting events featuring their wines, as well as delectable nibbles that perfectly pair with them.



Savor Sunday, Vintner-Hosted Winery Experience. Photo Courtesy: Bob McClenahan.

## **What makes Stags Leap District special?**

**Nancy Bialek:** On the eastern edges of the Napa Valley, the famed Stags Leap District American Viticultural Area produces wines renowned for grace and power, with lush fruit and soft tannins.





Photo Courtesy: Rocco Ceselin

Our unique terroir of being a Valley within a Valley holds in morning fog to cool the area which keeps wine acidity high while at the same time the appellation harnesses the afternoon sun reflected on the west-facing volcanic Palisades which ripens our fruit long and slow creating these hallmark characteristics.

It is a region that produces elegant, age-worthy, and memorable wines, particularly Cabernet Sauvignon, for which it is especially known; 90% of its 1,200 acres are planted, most to Cabernet Sauvignon and other Bordeaux varieties. It is the smallest AVA in the Napa Valley and has a history of grape growing dating back to the mid-1800s.

Of course, it is also recognized as the birthplace of the winning red wine of the 1976 Tasting of Paris. But that was just the beginning...