

LIFESTYLE > SPIRITS

An All-Encompassing Cabernet Sauvignon From Stags Leap District

By **Tom Hyland**, Contributor. © Tom Hyland writes about wine (and sometimes) food from Europe and US.

Published Oct 11, 2025, 03:06pm EDT



Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon Collaboration 2023 vintage
ROCCO CESELIN

The Stags Leap District (SLD) in southeastern Napa Valley is one of the premier growing areas for Cabernet Sauvignon in this world-famous wine region. Given its cool temperatures - relative to areas further north in the valley - the examples of Cabernet Sauvignon from here are less aggressive than many other Napa Valley offerings, though no less in terms of quality. The best SLD Cabernets have plenty of ripeness, and are

structured for 15-25 years of cellaring (even longer in certain vintages), yet are much more approachable upon release. Typically, you don't have to wait several years when one of these wines is released, as they have a great deal of charm and finesse; this style has made Cabernet Sauvignons from the Stags Leap District very successful with critics, and especially with consumers.



The palisades of the Stags Leap District where legend has it that stags would leap over the hills and bluffs.

ROCCO CESELIN

There are fewer than 20 producers in the Stags Leap District, which include some of the best-known names in Napa Valley, such as Shafer Vineyards, Pine Ridge Vineyards, Chimney Rock Winery, Stags' Leap Winery and Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. These five producers, along with eight other district wineries have worked together to produce a one-of-a-kind wine called the Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon Collaboration.

This wine, from the 2023 - an outstanding Cabernet vintage in Napa Valley - is the third release of this ultra-premium wine; the initial two releases were from the 2021 and 2022 vintages. This is truly a remarkable project, a wine from 13 estates that communicates the strengths of what this district is all about. Getting that many producers to combine their efforts to craft this wine is labor intensive and time-consuming, so it's rare to witness such

a collaboration; it's also very rewarding.



The winemaking team for the Stags Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon Collaboration
ROCCO CESELIN

The winemaking team for this wine consisted of five individuals, pictured above. They are from left to right: Jess McDowell of Lindstrom Wines; Ludovic Dervin of Stags' Leap Winery; Josh Widaman, Pine Ridge Vineyards; Alison Rodriguez, Silverado Vineyards, and Marcus Notaro, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars.

It's fascinating to learn the thoughts of a few of these individuals about their work on this wine, and what it means to them. For Notaro, this collaboration is a win-win situation. "Over the years I've learned that collaboration doesn't dilute identity, it strengthens it. Working alongside my peers across the District helps us all elevate our expression of terroir, leverage shared marketing and fundraising energy, and tell a more compelling story together than any one label could alone."

Widaman is also cognizant of the benefits of this project. "The Cabernet Collaboration is more than just a wine release, it's a way for our wineries to pool resources and shine together, all while supporting the nonprofit work of the Stags Leap District. It reinforces a culture of collaboration across our community, grounded in a shared sense of place and

purpose.”

The wine will be released on October 15; total production is 900 bottles; the price is \$275 per bottle. To learn more about this wine, as well as a special annual event in Stags Leap District known as Vineyard to Vintner, a three-day experience from April 24-26, 2006, where guests can meet the district producers, taste the wines and attend a special dinner, click [here](#).