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Stags Leap District Celebrates 25 Years as the Birthplace of Iconic American Cabernet Sauvignon

2014 marks the 25th anniversary for one of Napa Valley's significant and most collectible sub-AVAs

Stags Leap District Napa, CA February 4, 2014 – Stags Leap District, the birthplace of iconic American Cabernet Sauvignon, today announced that 2014 marks the 25th anniversary of this world class region as one of the first sub American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) in the Napa Valley. Recognized as an official AVA in 1989 by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), the Stags Leap District was the first sub-AVA to be defined completely by soil, climate and natural barriers. Its AVA status and distinctive terroir are a result of the combination of rolling hills, cooling wind, loam and clay soils, and the west-facing range of the Vaca Mountains. The Stags Leap District is the smallest producing Napa AVA by acreage, and wines from this region remain limited, highly allocated and collected. Approximately 90 percent of the 1,200 acres currently planted to grapevines in the district are Cabernet Sauvignon or other Bordeaux varietals.

"The Stags Leap District produces some very age-worthy Cabernet Sauvignon-based wines," said Kelli White, sommelier at PRESS Restaurant in St. Helena. "The region is truly a place of distinction. The geography of Stags Leap District makes it different than any other place in the Napa Valley and results in the seductive, soft tannins for which Stags Leap District wines are highly regarded."

While 2014 marks the silver anniversary for the AVA; Stags Leap District has been a grape-growing region since the mid-1800's. The first Cabernet Sauvignon vines were planted in 1961 by pioneer Nathan Fay. His fruit was in high demand and sourced by winemakers throughout the valley in the early 1970's. In 1976, the famed Tasting of Paris catapulted the region into the global spotlight when French judges awarded a 1973 Cabernet Sauvignon from Stag's Leap Wine Cellars first place over legendary Bordeaux producers.

Ten years later when the same wines were tasted blind a second time, top honors again went to a Stags Leap District wine, the 1972 Clos du Val Cabernet Sauvignon. Today, Stags Leap District is represented by one of only two American wines in the Smithsonian National Museum of History.

"The beauty and lushness of the wines produced in this region were around long before Stags Leap District was named an AVA," said Doug Shafer, president of Shafer Vineyards. "It was a privilege to be here in the early days when my dad, John Shafer, helped organize our neighbors to pursue official recognition. Over the past 25 years the appellation has continued to evolve and is now widely recognized as a special site for world-class wines. Even so, it really feels like we're just getting started."

"Stags Leap District was the first area to be recognized for its world-class American Cabernet Sauvignon and really was the birthplace of America's Cabernet culture," said Michael Beaulac, general manager and winemaker at Pine Ridge Vineyards and president of the Stags Leap District Winegrowers Association. "Stags Leap District is one of only a handful of Napa Valley appellations that matter and the producers in this region continue to be visionaries committed to crafting the best quality wines."

SLD MEMBERS:

Baldacci Family Vineyards
Chimney Rock Winery
Cliff Lede Vineyards
Clos Du Val
Hartwell Vineyards
Isley Vineyards
Lindstrom Wines
Malk Family Vineyards
Odette Estate
Pine Ridge Vineyards
Regusci Winery

Robinson Family Vineyards
Shafer Vineyards
Silverado Vineyards
Stag's Leap Wine Cellars
Stags' Leap Winery
Steltzner Vineyards
Taylor Family Vineyards
Terlato Family Vineyard

Stags Leap District's 25th Anniversary

Stags Leap District is the birthplace of world-class American Cabernet Sauvignon and is the only appellation to have a wine featured in the Smithsonian National Museum of History. In 1989 the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) approved the Stags Leap District an official sub-AVA of the Napa Valley. While the official AVA status was granted 25 years ago, the vintners in Stags Leap District has been perfecting Cabernet for more than 50 years. Napa Valley wine pioneer, Nathan Fay, first planted Cabernet in the region in 1961 seeing a resemblance to Bordeaux in the combination of the Stags Leap District's rolling hills, cooling wind, and loam clay soil. The Judgment of Paris in 1976 brought Stags Leap Cabernet to the world stage where the region was cemented as a world-class Cabernet producing region. Today, Stags Leap District wines are some of the most collectible in the world. Limited and in high-demand, wines from Stags Leap District are highly allocated and collected. More information can be found at stagsleapdistrict.com.

Vineyard to Vintner 25th Anniversary Seminar 'Looking Back, Leaping Forward' April 25-27, 2014: While Stags Leap District wineries will celebrate the 25th Anniversary throughout 2014, the Stags Leap District Winegrowers Association is dedicating their annual "Vineyard to Vintner" celebration to the silver anniversary. Consumers, wine media and trade are invited to this exclusive three-day weekend which offers intimate opportunities to taste the appellation's world-class Cabernets while mingling with the winery owners and vintners. Events include dinners, open houses (many at wineries that are not open to the public), an intriguing panel discussion and tasting on what has made this region so distinctive over the past 25 years. A grand finale vintner-hosted brunch on Sunday, features a sneak preview of the upcoming Appellation Collection to be released Fall 2014. Visitors are able to choose their experiences, Friday through Sunday, and visit any of the 19 Stags Leap District Winegrower member wineries on Saturday. Pricing ranges from \$175 for a single day pass up to \$725 for the full three days and a Signature Weekend for Two that includes a collectable signed bottle edition of the Association's limited Appellation Collection for \$2,995. Tickets go on sale on Feb. 14 at stagsleapdistrict.com/V2V

About Stags Leap District Winegrowers

The Stags Leap District Winegrowers is a nonprofit association of vintners and growers united by the mission of enhancing the reputation of the appellation and its wines, and sharing its quality with the wine-loving world. The SLDWA is comprised of 19 wineries and 10 grower members. Wineries include: Baldacci Family Vineyards, Chimney Rock Winery, Cliff Lede Vineyards, Clos Du Val, Hartwell Vineyards, Ilsley Vineyards, Lindstrom Wines, Malk Family Vineyards, Pine Ridge Vineyards, Odette Estate Winery, Regusci Winery, Shafer Vineyards, Silverado Vineyards, Robinson Family Vineyards, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, Stags' Leap Winery, Steltzner Vineyards, Taylor Family Vineyards, and Terlato Family Vineyards. To learn more about the Stags Leap District, visit stagsleapdistrict.com or find them on [facebook.com/StagsLeapDistrict](https://www.facebook.com/StagsLeapDistrict).

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