

**Steltzner Vineyards****2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, Estate
(Stags Leap District)**

As with Steltzner's 2003 Merlot priced at \$26, this Cabernet has got to be one of the best prices of the year out of the Napa Valley; especially when one considers that the grapes are from the highly regarded Stags Leap District and that the average bottle of Napa red averages about \$50.

The wine is lovely and soft with black fruit aromas. On the palate there's blackberry and blueberry flavors with a richness and elegance. This is a world-class Cabernet that shows much restraint despite a substantial backbone of fine-grained tannins for long-term aging. Hold onto it for a

year and then drink it over the next 20 years.

Part of the reason why this producer can sell its wines at such reasonable prices is that it sources its fruit from its own vineyard, and that the proportion of new wood used is typically low (although I don't know the exact percentage of new barrels used for this wine). The wine spent 20 months aging in French oak and was bottled with a listed alcohol of 14.3 percent.

Reviewed April 11, 2007 by [Alan Goldfarb](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Steltzner Vineyards](#)

Vineyard: Estate

Vintage: 2003

Wine: Cabernet Sauvignon

Appellation: [Stags Leap District](#)

Grapes: [Cabernet Sauvignon](#) (95%), [Cabernet Franc](#) (3%), [Merlot](#) (2%)

Price: \$36.00

THE REVIEWER**Alan Goldfarb**

Alan Goldfarb has been writing about and reviewing wine for 17 years. His reviews have been published in the *St. Helena Star*, *San Jose Mercury*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Decanter*, and *Wine Enthusiast*, among others. Not once has he used a point system, star

system, or an iconic symbol to quantify a wine. What counts in Mr. Goldfarb's criteria when judging a wine is: how it tastes in the glass; is it well-constructed; its food compatibility; and presence of redeeming regional attributes.