

Shafer

An icon of Napa Valley, this Cabernet delivers profound richness, precise structure, and age-worthy finesse from the steep slopes of the Stags Leap District.

Hillside Select 2019

California, USA



Region and Vineyards

Shafer Hillside Select is rooted exclusively in the **Stags Leap District**, a revered appellation in the southeastern portion of Napa Valley. This AVA is internationally renowned for producing Cabernet Sauvignon of extraordinary purity, balance, and longevity. The district's signature terroir—**volcanic soils layered with ancient river sediments**—offers exceptional drainage and low fertility, encouraging vines to struggle, resulting in smaller berries with concentrated flavor. Combined with dramatic diurnal temperature shifts, the region's climate preserves acidity and structure while allowing full phenolic ripeness.

The wine is sourced from Shafer's estate hillside parcels: **Sunspot, John's Upper 7, Venado Ilegal**, and **Firebreak**. These steep, rugged vineyard blocks are cultivated with painstaking care, and their extreme slope angles ensure maximum sun exposure and airflow, leading to exceptional fruit quality. Yields are kept deliberately low, and all vineyard work is performed with sustainable viticultural practices, reinforcing the estate's deep respect for the land and its long-term vitality. These elevated sites give Hillside Select its hallmark power, complexity, and ability to age gracefully for decades.

Winemaking

The 2018 growing season was long, cool, and even—offering ideal ripening conditions. The fruit enjoyed extended hang time under Napa's summer sun, developing deep color, layered aromas, and intense concentration.

Made from **100% Cabernet Sauvignon**, this wine was fermented and then aged for **32 months in 100% new French oak** (from Allier and Tronçais forests). The extended élevage builds structure, complexity, and polish. With **15.5% alcohol**, the wine displays generous opulence while maintaining impeccable balance—an achievement of both vineyard and cellar precision.

Alcohol :15,50 %

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Opaque ruby with purple hues, signaling depth and concentration.
- **Aroma:** Intense notes of blackberry, black cherry, warm earth, lavender, and baking spice, lifted by floral and mineral accents.
- **Palate:** Bold yet refined, with flavors of briar fruit, black plum, cassis, mocha, and cinnamon. Rich tannins and vibrant acidity frame a long, radiant finish with energy and finesse.

Did you know?

Hillside Select has been produced since 1978 and is only made from Shafer's most select hillside blocks. Its name reflects the vineyard's dramatic slopes—some of Napa Valley's most prized Cabernet sites.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Dry-aged prime rib with black truffle jus:** Richness and depth echo the wine's dark fruit and oak-spiced palate.
- **Venison loin with blackberry gastrique:** The wild fruit and gamey notes mirror the wine's briary complexity.
- **Porcini mushroom ragù with polenta:** Earthy tones complement the Cabernet's savory layers and mocha nuances.
- **Aged Gouda or Comté:** Their nutty, crystalline character pairs beautifully with the wine's opulence and structure.

98 JEB DUNNUCK

Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 98 Points (2019)

The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select is another magical vintage for this cuvée. All Cabernet Sauvignon from hillside vineyards on the eastern side of Stags Leap, it offers a vivid purple hue as well as extraordinary notes of cassis, black raspberries, violets, camphor, and spring flowers, with perfectly integrated background oak. Full-bodied but not massive, it's flawlessly balanced on the palate and has ultra-fine tannins, a seamless, elegant mouthfeel, and a great, great finish. It's another 30- to 40-year wine from this incredible team that readers will absolutely love.Rating:98+

98 vinous

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 98 Points (2019)

The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select is one of the most elegant wines I have tasted at Shafer. Effusive aromatics and silky tannins are immediately captivating. Crushed red/purplish berry fruit, mint, spice, lavender and licorice are all finely knit. We will see, but the 2019 may very well represent a new direction for Hillside Select, one of Napa Valley's most iconic Cabernets.

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James Suckling (JS) : 98 Points (2019)

A beautiful nose of pitted cherries, redcurrants, fresh herbs and violets. Full-bodied with fine, structured tannins. More gravelly, mineral and dark than the nose lets on. Savory almost. Terrific depth and concentration that keeps the palate flavorful through the generous finish. Chocolate, sage, rosemary, bark and moss. Layered. Superb wine. Needs time to come together. Best after 2024 and onward.

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