

NOVEMBER 2009 • 3.95

milestone

Michael Beaulac

• Pine Ridge Winery

Michael Beaulac is the new winemaker and general Manager for Pine Ridge, the estate winery founded in 1978. "This is a huge change for me," he says, referring to his eight-year stint as winemaker for St. Supery in the Napa Valley.

Beaulac, standing tall against the pines along the ridge on the Stags Leap District estate, explains that the winery is "appellation driven," making wines not only off the SLD estate property but also from four other Napa Valley appellations.

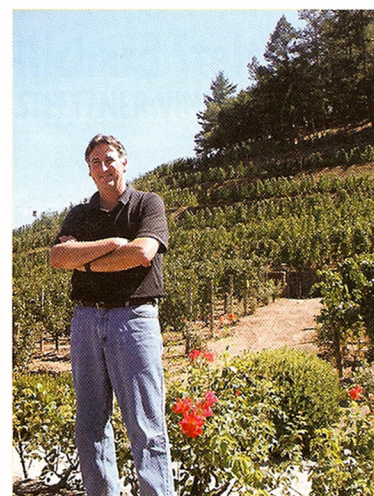
"This is my first venture with Stags Leap fruit," he admits. "I came here, not to fix a problem [he replaced Stacy Clark, who was winemaker at Pine Ridge for 25 years], but to shift the focus. I love making wine, but I also enjoy taking control of the vineyards, working closely with our vineyard manager. To put my fingerprint on the property seemed like a good thing to do.

Beaulac's goal with Pine Ridge is to ensure more balance in the vines. "I want to put the vigor back. We have exceptional vineyards, but I think they have been overly stressed. I'm expecting to see more prominent fruit from our Stags Leap District property."

LEAP OF FAITH

As Stags Leap District celebrates its 20th anniversary as an AVA, we talk with pioneers and new players in this unique and prestigious Silverado Trail appellation

story and photos by Meridith May



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