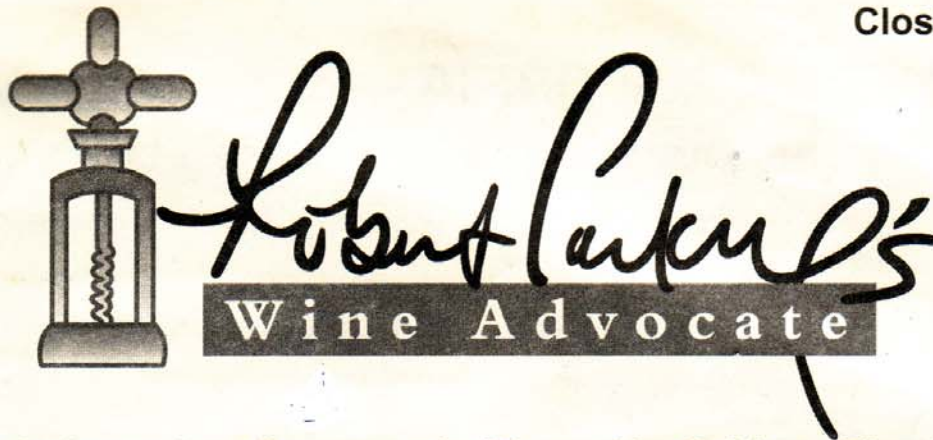


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## The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine RATING SYSTEM

Robert Parker's rating system employs a 50-100 point quality scale. It is my belief that the various twenty (20) point rating systems do not provide enough flexibility and often result in compressed and inflated wine ratings. THE WINE ADVOCATE takes a hard, very critical look at wine, since I would prefer to underestimate the wine's quality than to overestimate it. The numerical ratings are utilized only to enhance and complement the thorough tasting notes, which are my primary means of communicating my judgments to you.

**96-100** An **extraordinary** wine of profound and complex character displaying all the attributes expected of a classic wine of its variety. Wines of this caliber are worth a special effort to find, purchase, and consume.

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<b>CLIFF LEDE</b>	<b>2007 CABERNET SAUVIGNON STAGS LEAP</b>	<b>NAPA</b>	<b>(\$60.00)</b>	<b>RED</b>	<b>93</b>
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As the results attest, owner Cliff Lede, manager David Abreu, and up and coming winemaker Michelle Edwards are all obsessed with high quality. The ubiquitous Michel Rolland is also in the background for blending, consulting, etc. The 2007s appear to be stunning efforts. For starters, the **2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap** (75% Cabernet Sauvignon and the rest Merlot, Malbec, Petit Verdot, and Cabernet Franc) is everything that one expects in a wine from this sector that is known for elegance, harmony, and Margaux-like finesse. A perfectly balanced Cabernet, it exhibits a dense purple color along with a big, sweet nose of spring flowers, black and red currants as well as graphite. It is deep, rich, young, and promising with plenty of tannin, but an unmistakable, profound minerality. Although accessible, 2-3 years of bottle age will be beneficial, and the wine should age for two decades. A proprietary red, the **2007 High Fidelity** (50% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and the rest Cabernet Franc, Malbec, and Petit Verdot) is the most forward and developed of this quintet. Evolved notes of mocha, black cherry liqueur, cola, smoke, and sweet roasted herbs jump from the glass of this dense, plum/purple-tinged wine. Medium-bodied and elegant with sweet tannin and pure fruit, this beauty can be drunk over the next 12-14 years.