

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2018 CLIFF LEDE “POETRY” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Sourced from the steep hillside Poetry Vineyard, this wine represents the highest expression of our estate.

Vintage

The 2018 vintage was a glorious growing year for Napa Valley. A frost-free and uniform bud break was followed by steady spring weather during flowering, allowing for an even and generous fruit set. Summer conditions were moderate, with warm days and cool nights, ideal for slow and steady grape maturation. Optimal ripeness was achieved thanks to an early autumn of consistently warm, but not hot, days. The pristine ripening conditions allowed for very intense fruit flavor concentrations. The wines show exceptional balance with concentrated, ripe fruit complemented by bright acidity and supple, yet intense, structure.

Vineyard

The Poetry Vineyard, carved into a steep west-facing hillside, reaches from the highest elevations of the Stags Leap District appellation to the valley floor. This vineyard draws its uniqueness from shallow, volcanic soils atop fractured shale. Due to the stressful nature of the site, planted with high vine density and farmed to very low yields, the vines develop slowly and produce small flavorful berries. The vineyard is planted to legendary, proprietary heritage selections of Cabernet Sauvignon.

Winemaking

In the cool darkness of night, grapes were hand-picked into twenty-five pound bins to minimize crushing. By early morning, the grapes were subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, which includes our cutting edge optical sorter and a slow, individual berry hand sort. The fruit was gently gravity-delivered to small tanks by our unique crane system, which kept the berries intact. Cold soaks lasted from five to eight days, and fermentations were managed through a combination of pump overs and *délestage*. Extended maceration of up to six weeks ensured exceptional extraction and fine-tuning of tannin profiles. Following twenty-one months of *élevage* in French oak barrels, 82% of which were new, the blend was selected from our best lots of the Poetry Vineyard.

Winemaker Notes

The deep garnet 2018 Poetry is already fully integrated, with its well-appointed components all seamlessly leaping from the glass. Dark red and black currants, black raspberries, and candied violets form this elixir’s fruitier elements, while a bouquet of pretty ylang-ylang, jasmine, lilac, and tuberose blossoms decorate the balmy perfume. The lush, effortless quality of this vintage shows in this wine’s unified precision and heady sandalwood, cedar, loam, and rose petal notes that fleck the long fresh finish.

-Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, and 1% Cabernet Franc
Bottling Date: July 2020
Release Date: September 2021
Production: 1436 cases