

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2022 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, NAPA VALLEY

Cliff Lede Vineyards is a family-owned and operated winery located in the famed Stags Leap District. For over 20 years, Cliff Lede Vineyards has prioritized crafting wines of extraordinary quality with authenticity and sustainability in mind.

Vintage

Warm temperatures in February and March jumpstarted an early 2022 growing season. Early budbreak often comes with the vulnerability to frost, but luckily our vines suffered no damage during the cool spring nights. Early irrigations were necessary to set up healthy canopies and the vines set an average crop after an uneventful bloom period. The uniform and even clusters needed little thinning, and attention was paid to sculpting the shoots and laterals to ensure adequate shading and airflow throughout the fruiting positions. Late August was hot, and September was forecasted to be even hotter, so we began picking in rapid succession before the heat to preserve the fresh acidities and delicate aromatics already present in the grapes.

Vineyards

Our Stags Leap District and Calistoga estate vineyards build the foundation of this wine with support from valued grower sites located in Oakville, Rutherford, and Howell Mountain. Composed of small batches from a variety of blocks of varying age, this wine represents a diverse range of carefully selected rootstocks and clones. Yields are maintained at sparse levels, with a focus on canopy management and vine balance. The resulting blend boasts a remarkable depth and complexity that is quintessential Napa Valley.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours. The freshly harvested fruit immediately underwent rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, which included our cutting-edge optical sorter. Whole berries were gently delivered by gravity to tank using our crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately seven days, and fermentations were managed via a combination of *délestage*, pumpovers, and punchdowns. Extended maceration ranging from four to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, allowing us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 72% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

The precocious and playful 2022 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is so full of youthful exuberance. Intense aromas of black fig, chocolate covered cherries, and silky cassis leap from the glass. Spice notes of cardamom, Tahitian vanilla, and anise intertwine with the dark fruit notes to give complexity and nuance. With time in the decanter, the lush and silky texture unfolds, enveloping the palate like fine cashmere. This comely and versatile wine will pair effortlessly with a multitude of cuisines. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc, 1% Malbec
Alcohol: 14.0%
Production: 4,534 cases
Bottling Date: July 2024