

## 2014 CLIFF LEDE SAUVIGNON BLANC, NAPA VALLEY

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, Vineyard Architect David Abreu, and Winemaker Chris Tynan have come together to form an unrivaled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

### Vintage

The 2014 vintage was a vintner's dream. A dry winter with unseasonably warm temperatures led to an early bud break that set the stage for one of the earliest harvests on record. Moderate weather throughout the spring and summer allowed the vines to achieve a good set. The dry conditions led to low vigor vines and small, abundant berries, creating very concentrated fruit that ripened with the warm fall days. With lovely autumn weather, harvest proceeded at a steady pace.

### Vineyards

Our Sauvignon Blanc is a lively, yet elegant, expression of this varietal in Napa Valley. The primary vineyard source, located in eastern Rutherford, has old vines planted to a heritage Musqué clone and Sémillon, providing density, richness, and citrus notes. Another component of the Sauvignon Blanc is sourced from a vineyard in the southeastern hills of Napa Valley residing on ancient, weathered, alluvial fans of silty impoverished soils that contribute an intense brightness and minerality. In addition, we include grapes from a cooler climate vineyard on the east side of Napa, imparting vibrant acidity and finesse to the wine. A vineyard in Chiles Valley, a small pocket in eastern Napa County, contributes complexity with old vines of Sauvignon Vert planted in 1947.

### Winemaking

The fruit was hand-harvested in the cool, darkness of night and arrived at the winery at dawn. The grapes were then held in controlled conditions of low oxygen and cold temperatures. Approximately half of the fruit underwent gentle, whole-cluster pressing and the remainder was destemmed and experienced between six and twelve hours of skin contact prior to pressing. The juice was fermented in 44% stainless steel tanks, 49% French, mostly neutral, oak barrels, and 7% concrete eggs. All fermentations were conducted at cold temperatures to preserve the freshness of the fruit. Upon reaching dryness, the wine was aged on its lees and underwent daily or weekly *battonage*. Secondary fermentation was suppressed.

### Winemaker Notes

Our symphony of white varieties excelled in the harmonious 2014 vintage and this bottling is perhaps the most unctuous and opulent we've ever produced. With the color of yellow diamonds, this gem of a wine shines brilliantly in the glass and tempts with alluring aromas of tangerine, lemon verbena, fall persimmon, and honeyed white peach. Gorgeous floral notes of orange blossom, honeysuckle, and night blooming jasmine intertwine with the top notes of the effusive bouquet. The gentle *battonage* during fermentation brought out a seductive texture that coats the palate with layers of lemon curd, quince paste, and crème brûlée. A vibrant spine of minerality supports the wonderfully rich texture and, as the lengthy finish unfolds, lovely flavors of kumquat, marzipan, and citrus marmalade fill the olfactory senses.

### Analysis

Composition: 85% Sauvignon Blanc, 12% Sémillon, 3% Sauvignon Vert  
Alcohol: 14.7%  
Production: 7,100 cases  
Bottling Date: March 2015  
Release Date: May 2015