

2017 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

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

Vintage

Vintners won't soon forget the 2017 vintage in Napa Valley. A wet winter provided welcome relief from a prolonged drought that began with the 2012 vintage. Spring arrived early, bringing with it warm weather and soaking rains that segued to an early budbreak and the development of beautiful canopies. The season trended warm and was punctuated with a series of heatwaves, the most dramatic one over Labor Day weekend. The well-developed and meticulously manicured canopies, along with strategically placed shade cloth, protected the natural acidity and delicate fruit flavors during the warm spells. All of the fruit was harvested well ahead of the fires and the resulting wines are laden with lively fruit flavors and voluptuous body.

Vineyards

The fruit was sourced from the hillside terraces of our Poetry Vineyard, our Twin Peaks Vineyard estate surrounding the winery, and a few neighboring vineyards in the Stags Leap District. The wine is composed of small lots from our best blocks, representing a diverse range of carefully selected clones and rootstocks. From Poetry's exposed, rocky terraces boasting volcanic origins, to the ancient riverbed alluvial soils of Twin Peaks, the breadth of contributing sites translates into a wine of impressive complexity.

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, 65% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

The 2017 Stags Leap Cabernet is darkly ruby/purple colored and possesses vibrant aromas of violets, lavender, blackberry, huckleberry, black licorice, and warm chocolate covered cherries. Juicy, penetrating, and conveying terrific depth, this gorgeously flavored wine possesses layers of blood orange, cardamom, cocoa powder, and slate. The long opulent finish continues on with notes of minerals, loam, pan grille, and cassis, whilst the supple tannins go on supporting the well framed structure.

Analysis

Composition: 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc
Alcohol: 14.9%
Production: 5,648 cases
Bottling Date: July 2019
Release Date: February 2020