

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

NAPA VALLEY

2022 CLIFF LEDE SAUVIGNON BLANC, NAPA VALLEY

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 to preserve the fresh acidities and delicate aromatics already present in the grapes. We harvested our Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon from north in Calistoga on August 22nd and finished with our coolest Carneros estate vineyard on September 9th.

Vineyards

Our Sauvignon Blanc is a lively, yet elegant, expression of this varietal that gathers its complexity from both the diversity of terroir running north to south in the Napa Valley and from the inclusion of the rich and unctuous Sémillon grape. This blend includes Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon from our estate vineyards in Calistoga, Stags Leap District, and Carneros. A grower vineyard in eastern Rutherford is home to old vines planted to a heritage Musqué clone that provides density, richness, and lemon citrus notes. Finally, old vine Sémillon from another site in Calistoga gives the wine an expansive mouth-coating richness that is the hallmark of our style.

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. Gentle, whole-cluster pressing released the delicate, prized juices from the clusters and created a deeper level of complexity. The juice was fermented in 86% French oak barrels and 14% stainless steel tanks. 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 select lots underwent occasional *battonage*.

Winemaker Notes

Vivid and inviting, the 2022 Sauvignon Blanc brims with energy and an elegant vivaciousness. The refreshing aromatics soar on layers of casaba melon, pineapple, and honeysuckle flowers. Flavors of kiwi, white peach, mango, and cucumber glide seamlessly along the palate with accents of sea salt, warm brioche, and persimmon tinged on the long and brightly tuned finish. A splendid note of flinty minerality persists on the tongue as this wine of poise and contemplation bids the taster for another sip. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 78% Sauvignon Blanc and 22% Sémillon

Alcohol: 13.6%

Production: 7385 cases

Bottling Date: April 2023

Release Date: May 2023