2005 Cliff Lede Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley

Vintage
After a fairly typical start to the growing season, the spring of 2005 turned quite wet. Despite the warm (a few March days registered in the high 80's) and wet conditions, flowering and fruit set in our Sauvignon Blanc vineyards were very even. Summer and fall were noteworthy for their thoroughly normal temperatures and a complete lack of intense heat spikes; only a couple of days broke 100° all summer. The pristine ripening conditions in fall allowed for extremely long hang time, which is ideally suited for very intense fruit flavor concentrations.

Vineyard
The majority of the fruit was sourced from a vineyard in the southeastern hills of Napa Valley. This vineyard resides on ancient, weathered alluvial fans of silty, impoverished soils that contribute an intense mineral austerity. We included some fruit from a vineyard in the Oakville appellation to provide a distinctive ripe vibrancy that reflects its microclimate.

Winemaking
The fruit was hand-harvested from August 30th to September 2nd and arrived at the winery at dawn. Throughout processing the grapes were held in controlled atmospheric conditions of low oxygen and cold temperatures. Following intensive hand sorting, they underwent gentle, whole cluster pressing prior to fermentation. The juice was fermented in stainless steel, French oak barrels, and even a giant concrete egg, all at cold temperatures to preserve the freshness of the fruit and to build complexity. Upon reaching dryness, the wine was aged on its lees, and malolactic fermentation was suppressed.

Tasting Notes
The 2005 Cliff Lede Sauvignon Blanc bursts out of the glass with heaps of apricot, lychee fruit, boronia flowers, passion fruit and flint. Layers of white peach, mineral liqueur, and lime oil complement a rich mouthfull of lingering honey which lends itself to a lusciously long expressive finish.

Analysis
Alcohol: 14.1%
T.A.:   6.2g/l
pH: 3.40
Production: 2637 cases
Bottling Date: March 6, 2006
Release Date: May 1, 2006