

2006 Cliff Lede Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley

Vintage

Weather patterns during the 2006 growing season shifted abruptly, as if on command, to meet the needs of the developing fruit. Cool and wet conditions throughout April resulted in a late bud break, about three weeks later than average. The swift transition to warm, dry weather in May was instrumental in quick bloom and fruit set, with strong growth and great set throughout. Just at the onset of veraison summer's heat intensified, resulting in many straight days of triple digits. The hottest July on record gave way to below-average temperatures in August and September, allowing even ripening and long hang times. Overall, the combination of perfect fruit set and ideal ripening has produced the most concentrated, intense, and enchanting of wines, and will allow 2006 to be one of the great Napa vintages.

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 brightness and mineral austerity. In addition, we incorporated fruit from a delightful cooler climate vineyard on the east side of Napa, imparting a vibrant acidity and finesse to the wine. Finally, we rounded out the blend with some Sauvignon Blanc grapes from a vineyard in the Oakville appellation which provide a distinctively rich component that reflects its superb microclimate.

Winemaking

The hand-harvested fruit arrived at dawn from September 5th to September 26th. Throughout processing, the grapes were held in controlled atmospheric conditions of low oxygen and cold temperatures. Following intensive hand sorting, the majority of the fruit underwent gentle whole-cluster pressing prior to fermentation. The juice was fermented in 70% stainless steel tanks, 5% stainless steel drums, 19% French oak barrels, and 6% concrete eggs, 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 2006 Cliff Lede Sauvignon Blanc is perfumed with panoply of aromas ranging from mandarin orange, lychee, and apricot, to fennel, mineral, and blooming flowers. This is a medium-bodied wine that is both crisp and flavorful with nuances of melon, grapefruit, and honeysuckle ending in a long and intense full finish.

Analysis

Composition:	98% Sauvignon Blanc, 2% Sauvignon Musqué
Alcohol:	14.1%
Bottled:	March 12, 2007
Released:	May 1, 2007
Production:	3780 cases