

## 2007 CLIFF LEDE CLARET, NAPA VALLEY

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, viticulturalist David Abreu, Winemaker Michelle Edwards, and consultant Michel Rolland have come together to form an unrivalled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

### Vintage

The lack of winter rainfall resulted in a severe soil moisture deficit at the start of the 2007 vintage. With a gradual transition to spring, and with the earliest irrigation on record, 2007 opened with cool weather and early growth. A mild April abruptly turned into a hot May and June, with grapevines blazing through bloom, fruit set, and the first phase of development. Even hotter weather in late summer incited some early berry shrivel and punctuated the start of harvest. Finally, a good rain in late October brought the harvest to a close. The vintage of 2007, which will prove to be a short crop by 10-25%, is most noted for its dry start and small berry size. In the end, the undersized crop came in with decidedly pronounced flavors of unusual depth and complexity.

### Vineyards

Fruit was sourced from our Twin Peaks Ranch on the Yountville Cross Road and a few of our valued growers within the Napa Valley. Yields are maintained at sparse levels, ranging from 2 to 3.5 tons per acre. The wine is composed of small batches from a variety of blocks, representing the diverse range of carefully selected rootstocks and clones.

### Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting and refinement process. The whole berries were gently delivered to tank by our crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days, and fermentations were managed via a combination of *delestage*, pumpovers, and punchdowns. Extended maceration ranging from three to four weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, allowing us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. The wine was aged in 46% new French oak and 54% neutral oak for eighteen months.

### Winemaker Notes

Aromas of boysenberries, plum and cassis entice the nose, easing into mandarin and molasses with a hint of cacao. Displaying balanced acidity and soft tannins, this wine delivers a mouth of soft ripe fruits dominated by cherry coulis.

### Analysis

Composition: 73% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Merlot, 9% Cabernet Franc, 8% Malbec  
Alcohol: 14.9%  
Bottled: July 2009  
Release: December 2009  
Production: 678 cases