

2008 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, viticulturalist David Abreu, Winemaker Kale Anderson and Consulting Winemaker Philippe Melka have come together to form an unrivalled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

Vintage

The growing season started with low soil moisture due to an abbreviated rainy season that delivered sparse precipitation. Vintage 2008, like the previous year, would unfold under drought conditions. Spring and an early bud break were greeted by an extended cold spell through early May, resulting in delayed growth and multiple days of frost. Bloom time finally saw a warming trend, allowing berry development to progress rapidly under warm and clear summer days, with the fog absent until the onset of *veraison*. Ripening progressed slowly and evenly. Then, as summer gave way to fall, building temperatures led to an early harvest. On par with the low yields of 2007, the 2008 vintage relays balanced crop flavors and profound intensity.

Vineyards

Our Fruit is sourced from exceptional high-elevation vineyards with volcanic soils in the Howell Mountain Appellation. The sun-drenched mountaintop vineyards have southwestern exposure and late afternoon breezes that ripen the fruit slowly and evenly. Cool nights promote balanced structure and acidity in the finished wines.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered hand-sorting system. The berries were gently delivered to tank by our distinctive crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately five to eight days and fermentations were managed via a combination of *delestage*, punchdowns and pumpovers. Extended maceration from three to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles. The wine underwent eighteen months of *elevage* in 80% new French Oak. Bottled Unfinned and Unfiltered.

Winemaker Notes

White pepper and tanned leather aromas evolve into crème de cassis, followed by violet and caramel as the wine slowly unfolds. Minerality and soft acidity preserve freshness and structure, while rich flavors of blackberry pie, coffee and velvety tannins persist in the finish. Enjoy this multi-layered wine over a long meal in which you can revisit the glass multiple times.

Analysis

Composition:	75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot
Alcohol:	14.5%
Bottling Date:	July 2010
Release Date:	October 2011
Production:	78 Cases
Picking Dates:	September 2 nd – September 29 th , 2008