

2010 CLIFF LEDE SAUVIGNON BLANC, NAPA VALLEY

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 2010 vintage began with a wet winter that kept the soil moist into spring. The vines responded with moderate vigor and healthy canopies. The cool temperatures in the spring continued through harvest resulting in one of Napa Valley's coolest vintages on record. The below average temperatures slowed berry development and ripening by two to three weeks in most varieties resulting in full ripeness at lower sugar levels. Early season thinning lowered yields and allowed the grapes to achieve optimal ripeness and careful canopy management protected the fruit from a couple of heat waves in late August and September. Most of the crop was harvested in mid-October during an intense two week period just ahead of the late October heat and early November rains.

Vineyards

A portion of the Sauvignon Blanc fruit is 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 include fruit from a delightful cooler climate vineyard on the east side of Napa. This source imparts vibrant acidity and finesse to the wine. The third source, located in eastern Rutherford, provides density and richness.

Winemaking

The fruit was hand-harvested and arrived at the winery at dawn. Once received, the grapes were held in controlled conditions of low oxygen and cold temperatures. Followed by meticulous hand-sorting, some of the fruit underwent gentle, whole-cluster pressing and another portion was subjected to 16 hours of skin contact prior to pressing. The juice was fermented in 66% stainless steel tanks, 26% French oak barrels (9% new oak, 17% neutral oak), 1% stainless steel drums, and 7% concrete eggs. All fermentations were conducted 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 underwent weekly *battonage*. Secondary fermentation was suppressed.

Winemaker Notes

Gravenstein apple and Meyer lemon greet the nose with floral, high notes of peach blossom. Pineapple and lychee are supported by fine-tuned minerality. A luscious mid-palette expands into a rich and long finish.

Analysis

Composition: 99% Sauvignon Blanc, 1% Semillon
Alcohol: 14.7%
Production: 6,552 cases
Bottling Date: March 2010
Release Date: May 2010
Price: \$23