

2011 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, DIAMOND MOUNTAIN

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, viticulturist David Abreu, and Winemaker Chris Tynan have come together to form an unrivalled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

Vintage

The 2011 vintage began with cool wet weather that extended into spring, fully replenishing our reservoirs and water tables. Rain during flowering affected set for some varieties, causing shatter and lowering yields. Low temperatures delayed bud break and initial canopy development, but as the season progressed, the vines developed healthy, vigorous canopies. Cool weather persisted through the summer and autumn, resulting in the coolest vintage on record. Berry development and ripening were delayed by three weeks or more, leading to full ripeness at low sugar levels and vibrant acidity. Many vineyards were dry farmed or watered only once during the season to further concentrate the fruit. This is a vintage where diligent farming practices, including intensive canopy management and low yields, have produced elegant wines with lovely balance and structure.

Vineyards

Our Diamond Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon is from an exceptional, low-yielding vineyard with volcanic ash soils in the Diamond Mountain Appellation. The sun-drenched mountaintop vineyard has northeastern 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 hand-picked in the darkness of the early morning hours into small twenty-five pound harvest bins, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered hand-sorting system. The berries were gently gravity-delivered to tank using 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 *délestage*, punchdowns and pumpovers. Extended maceration from three to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles. The wine underwent eighteen months of *élevage* in French Oak, 88% new. Bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

Winemaker Notes

Dark, brooding cassis and Luxardo cherry aromas are infused with intriguing hints of dried porcini, damp earth, and woody pine. This robust mountain Cabernet displays spicy anise, cinnamon, and Aztec chocolate flavors supported by ashy, persistent tannins reminiscent of the wine's volcanic hillside *terroir*.

Analysis

Composition:	98% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc
Alcohol:	14.0%
Bottling Date:	July 2013
Release Date:	December 2014
Production:	202 Cases
Harvest Date:	October 18 th , 2011