

2011 CLIFF LEDE HIGH FIDELITY, NAPA VALLEY

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, Vineyard Architect David Abreu, and Winemaker Chris Tynan have come together to form an unrivaled 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

The Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon lots in this blend are from our Twin Peaks estate vineyard, and the Cabernet Franc hails from acclaimed viticulturist David Abreu's Madrona Ranch. Yields are maintained at sparse levels, ranging from two to three tons per acre, with meticulous attention to detail in the vineyard. The wine is composed of just a few of our best lots from our most cherished sites.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, including our cutting edge optical sorter. The whole berries were gently delivered by gravity to tank using our crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days, and fermentations were managed via a combination of *délestage*, 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 French oak barrels, 85% of which was new, for eighteen months.

Winemaker Notes

Inspired by the right bank blends of Bordeaux, this blend is built on the silky suppleness of Merlot, with Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon adding structure, complexity and richness. Red fruits dominate the aromatic profile of this wine, with pomegranate, kirsch, and strawberry pie layered with notes of brioche. Intriguing hints of blood orange zest, sweet bay laurel, smoldering embers and dried tobacco expand the bouquet. Silky tannins delight the senses, and bright acidity lifts and lengthens this beautiful wine.

Analysis

Composition:	46% Merlot, 29% Cabernet Franc, 23% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Petit Verdot
Alcohol:	14.7%
Bottled:	July 2013
Release:	February 2014
Production:	840 cases