

CLIFF LEDE  
VINEYARDS  
NAPA VALLEY

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INN

## 2013 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

### Vintage

An early, even growing season led the way to an excellent vintage in 2013. A warm, dry spring brought early bud break and uniform vine growth. June's warm end led to an early and even veraison, followed by steady maturation during the temperate late summer and early fall. Ideal weather, with no detrimental heat spikes or rain events, allowed us to harvest individual vineyard blocks at optimal ripeness with no constraints. Yields were plentiful, due to the favorable weather during bloom, but berries remained small, resulting in wines of exceptional depth and concentration. Slow ripening retained acidity, creating wines that are balanced, profound, and beautiful.

### Vineyards

Exceptional high-elevation vineyards in the Howell Mountain appellation produce intensely concentrated grapes for this wine. Soils are volcanic in origin and consist of two main types; the first is decomposed volcanic ash called tufa, and the second is red volcanic rock and clay that is high in iron. Both are nutrient poor, which stresses the vines, producing intense and structured wines from small clusters and berries. The altitude, climate, and soils combine to create a classic mountain Cabernet Sauvignon with incredible concentration, texture, and structure.

### Winemaking

Hand harvested in the cool early morning hours, the fruit was immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, including our cutting edge optical sorter, with a goal of eliminating less-than-perfect berries. The selected fruit was gently delivered to tank via gravity by our crane system, retaining perfect, whole berries. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days, and fermentations were managed by a combination of *délestage* and pump overs. Extended maceration, ranging from three to four weeks, fine-tuned tannin profiles, allowing us to build structure and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 50% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

### Winemaker Notes

Opaque ruby in color, this gloriously saturated and impeccably balanced mountain Cabernet is loaded with aromas of crème de cassis, seductive black cherry, and warm black fig. There is a veritable cornucopia of cooking spices simmering beneath the surface of this wine. Notes of smoked paprika, ancho chile, cumin, clove, and cacao all intertwine and soar out of the glass. The dash of Merlot adds a touch of grace by fleshing out the mid palate and lending a seamless, polished finish. Tantalizing notes of sage, rosemary, dry aged steak, and smoked cardamom linger and beg one for another taste. This is a wine of contemplation, as well as a wine of visceral pleasure. -Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

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| Composition:   | 96% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot |
| Alcohol:       | 15.3%                             |
| Bottling Date: | July 2015                         |
| Release Date:  | October 2016                      |
| Production:    | 740 cases                         |