

2013 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.

Inspired by the right bank blends of Bordeaux, Merlot and Cabernet Franc dominate the blend in the 2013 High Fidelity.

Vintage

An early growing season led the way to an excellent vintage in 2013. A warm, dry spring brought early bud break and uniform vine growth. Late June's heat wave 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

The Merlot in this blend is from our Twin Peaks estate vineyard, and the Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon 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 seven days, and fermentations were managed via a combination of *délestage*, pumpovers, and punchdowns. Extended maceration ranging from four to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, allowing us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 75% of which was new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

Our California love letter to the great wines of the Rive Droite is written in the purple inkiness of the best Merlots and Cabernet Francs in our cave. The 2013 High Fidelity blend is built on the silky suppleness of Merlot, the soaring aromatics of Cabernet Franc, and with Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot adding structure, complexity, and richness. This full-bodied wine exhibits all of the seductive opulence and seamless texture of the vintage. Loads of kirsch, melted black licorice, white chocolate, and truffle aromas fill the glass. Concentrated and rich on entry, the velvety tannins envelop one's palate as hints of cocoa powder and iron stretch out along the lengthy and harmonious finish.

Analysis

Composition: 50% Merlot, 29% Cabernet Franc, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 1% Petit Verdot
Alcohol: 15.2%
Bottled: July 2015
Release: February 2016
Production: 840 cases