

2014 CLIFF LEDE CLARET, 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 Christopher Tynan have come together to form an unrivaled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

Vintage

The 2014 vintage was a vintner's dream. A dry winter with unseasonably warm temperatures prompted an early bud break, leading to one of the earliest harvests on record. Moderate weather throughout the spring and summer allowed the vines to achieve a good set. The dry conditions led to low vigor vines and small, abundant berries, creating very concentrated fruit that ripened with the warm fall days. With lovely autumn weather, harvest proceeded at a steady pace.

Vineyards

Fruit was sourced from our Twin Peaks Vineyard in the Stags Leap District and a few of our valued growers within Napa Valley. Yields are maintained at sparse levels, with a focus on canopy management and vine balance. The wine is composed of small batches from a variety of blocks, representing a diverse range of carefully selected rootstocks and clones. The resulting blend boasts remarkable depth and complexity.

Winemaking

The grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered hand sorting process. The whole berries were gently gravity-delivered to tank by 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 punch downs. Extended maceration, ranging from three to four weeks, fine-tuned our tannin profiles, allowing us to build mouth feel and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak for eighteen months, and was bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Winemaker Notes

Complex and inviting, the dark ruby colored 2014 Claret dazzles the senses with explosive aromas of warm black fig, cassis, and dark melted chocolate. The bouquet continues on with notes of crushed Rainier cherries, graphite, and blackberry. The palate begins lush and expansive on entry, then turns incredibly silky and ultrafine. This ethereal finish crescendos with exotic spice notes of cumin, peppercorn, and smoked cardamom. – Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition:	75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Cabernet Franc, 6% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot, 4% Malbec
Alcohol:	15.3%
Bottled:	July 2016
Release:	December 2016
Production:	1,490 cases