

2014 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 2014 vintage was a vintner's dream. A dry late 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 soil 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

The Merlot in this blend is from our Twin Peaks estate vineyard, while the Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon hail from acclaimed viticulturist David Abreu's Madrona Ranch. The vineyard is farmed with meticulous attention to detail, maintaining yields at sparse levels—ranging from two to three tons per acre. 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. The freshly-harvested fruit immediately underwent rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, which included our cutting-edge optical sorter. 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

The 2014 High Fidelity possesses an opaque inky-purple hue of ruby, and a decadent perfume of confections and fresh meats. Aromas of just-picked raspberries and warm white chocolate sit atop notes of black licorice alongside candied plum and violets. With time in the glass, earth and spice notes emerge, and winter black truffle, boudin noir, burning incense, saucisson, cinnamon, black pepper, and nutmeg notes intrigue the olfactory. Long and silky, the sweet tannin fills out this concentrated, but lithe wine that possesses both power and precision.

Analysis

Composition: 65% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Franc, 9% Cabernet Sauvignon, 1% Petit Verdot

Alcohol: 15%

Production: 836 cases

Bottling Date: July 2016

Release Date: February 2017