

2015 MOON FANTASY CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. 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 2015 vintage was a wonderfully classic year for Napa Valley wines. A dry winter, followed by warm spring temperatures, led to an early bud break that set the stage for one of the earliest harvests on record. Crop levels were lower than average due to dry conditions and a cool weather spell during flowering. The dry soils led to low vigor vines and small berries, creating very concentrated fruit. With lovely summer weather, it was our earliest harvest on record and the red wines we produced are opulent, voluptuous wines with incredible concentration.

Vineyards

Our estate vineyard blocks are named after Cliff's favorite rock songs and albums. The name of this blend is derived from Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" in our Twin Peaks vineyard and from Traffic's "Dear Mr. Fantasy" in our Poetry vineyard. The Cabernet Sauvignon in "Dear Mr. Fantasy" is planted in shallow volcanic soil and farmed to low yields, contributing structure, concentration and classic Stags Leap character to the backbone of the blend. "Dark Side of the Moon" is a block of Cabernet that contributes a luxurious perfume, flavors of ripe, dark fruit, and plush texture.

Winemaking

In the cool darkness of night, grapes were hand-picked into twenty-five pound bins to minimize crushing. By early morning, the grapes were subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process which includes our cutting edge optical sorter, and a slow, individual berry hand sort. The fruit was gently gravity-delivered to small tanks by our unique crane system which kept the berries intact. Cold soaks lasted from five to eight days, and fermentations were managed through a combination of pump overs and *délestage*. Extended maceration of up to six weeks ensured exceptional extraction and fine-tuning of tannin profiles. This wine underwent twenty-one months of *élevage* in French oak barrels, 78% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

Surely our most elegant and reserved Rock Block wine to date, the 2015 Moon Fantasy charms the taster with its alluring perfume of violets and night blooming jasmine. Exquisitely precise flavors of blackberry and cassis unfold along the palate with scents of cigar box and orange liqueur soaring along the upper register of the olfactory. There is a lithe, almost gravity defying agility in the way the lush tannin play out along the long finish.

Analysis

Composition: 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot, and 2% Cabernet Franc
Production: 1,683 cases
Bottling Date: July 2017
Release Date: May 2018

These go to eleven.