

2016 SOUL FIRE 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 2016 vintage continued a series of exceptional vintages in Napa Valley. Another drought year, 2016 began with a dry winter, followed by a warm, frost-free early spring with just enough rainfall to fill the soil profile, leading to an early budbreak with resources to develop healthy canopies. The vintage progressed at a leisurely pace due to moderate temperatures throughout most of the remaining growing season. Crop levels were slightly below average due to a dry late spring and a cool weather spell during flowering. The dry soils led to small berries, creating very concentrated fruit. With lovely summer weather, grapes were harvested at optimal ripeness and the resulting wines have generous fruit with intensity and vibrancy.

Vineyards

Our estate vineyard blocks are named after Cliff's favorite rock songs and albums. The name of this blend is derived from The Yardbirds "Heart Full of Soul" in our Poetry vineyard and from The Doors' "Light My Fire" in our Twin Peaks vineyard. The Cabernet Sauvignon in "Heart Full of Soul" 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. "Light My Fire" 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, 62% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

Forged in the Stags Leap District, the tantalizing 2016 Soul Fire is a sexy purple hued beauty that radiates charm and warmth. Dark gobs of cassis and crushed blackberry layer atop a core of sumptuous black fig tinged with notes of spring violets and burning embers. The olfactory is draped in fragrances and flavors of lavender and chocolate ganache. A fresh acidity livens the palate and gives energy to the bright and long ultrafine finish.

Analysis

Composition: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, 1% Merlot, and 1% Cabernet Franc
Production: 1,933 cases
Bottling Date: July 2018
Release Date: April 2019

These go to eleven.