

2016 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Founder 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 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

The fruit was sourced from the hillside terraces of our Poetry Vineyard, our Twin Peaks Vineyard estate surrounding the winery, and a few neighboring vineyards in the Stags Leap District. The wine is composed of small lots from our best blocks, representing a diverse range of carefully selected clones and rootstocks. From Poetry's exposed, rocky terraces boasting volcanic origins, to the ancient riverbed alluvial soils of Twin Peaks, the breadth of contributing sites translates into a wine of impressive complexity.

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, 49% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

The inky black 2016 Stags Leap District is a lithe and tempting elixir that dazzles the senses. Even in its youth, it displays a fully integrated nose of fresh red and black currants, wild blackberries, and a perfumed bouquet of violets and lavender. Spice notes of smoked cardamom, anise, and cumin dance among the fig paste and Luxardo cherry flavors. The opulent finish crescendos in a wave of supple tannins, which nimbly glides along the palate and draws the taster back for another joyful sip.

Analysis

Composition: 79% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, 2% Cabernet Franc
Alcohol: 15.2%
Production: 6,720 cases
Bottling Date: July 2018
Release Date: February 2019