

**2017 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON,
BECKSTOFFER TO KALON VINEYARD, NAPA VALLEY**

Vintage

The Vintners won't soon forget the 2017 vintage in Napa Valley. A wet winter provided welcome relief from a prolonged drought that began with the 2012 vintage. Spring arrived early, bringing with it warm weather and soaking rains that segued to an early budbreak and the development of beautiful canopies. The season trended warm and was punctuated with a series of heat waves, the most dramatic one over Labor Day weekend. The well-developed and meticulously manicured canopies, along with strategically placed shade cloth, protected the natural acidity and delicate fruit flavors during the warm spells. All of the fruit was harvested well ahead of the fires and the resulting wines are laden with lively fruit flavors and voluptuous body.

Vineyard

Situated on the western Oakville bench, the celebrated Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard has gravelly loam soils with high mineral content derived from sedimentary deposits of the volcanic Mayacamas Mountains and the alluvial fan of the Napa River. The vineyard has low organic matter content and thorough drainage, which devigorates the vines and produces small berries that are ideal for wines with intense concentration. The site is warm and sunny throughout the day, but cooled by late afternoon breezes, producing ripe Cabernet Sauvignon with lovely acidity. The blocks that make up our blend represent a diverse array of the Beckstoffer To Kalon terroir and clonal selection, creating a unique and extraordinary wine from this critically praised site.

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 and wooden *cuvés* 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, 85% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

The 2017 To Kalon leads with an inviting aromatic display of violets, black forest cake, warm cherries, cardamom, and clove. There's bottomless depth of red and black licorice, cassis, wild blackberry, and blueberries all tinged with a hint of cedar, tarragon, and thyme. Weaved amongst the fruitier flavors are a bevy of terroir driven elements like sweet loam, river gravel, and iron. The natural acidity is so fresh and lively that it guides the long luxurious finish where savory porcini mushroom, shoyu, and black tea notes linger.

Analysis

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 515 cases
Bottling Date: July 2019
Release Date: May 2020