

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2010 CLIFF LEDE “POETRY” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Sourced from the steep hillside Poetry Vineyard, this wine represents the highest expression of our estate.

Vintage

The 2010 vintage began with a wet winter that kept the soil moist into spring. The vines responded with moderate vigor and healthy canopies. The cool temperatures in the spring continued through harvest resulting in one of Napa Valley’s coolest vintages on record. The below-average temperatures slowed berry development and ripening by two to three weeks in most varieties resulting in full ripeness at lower sugar levels. Early season thinning lowered yields and allowed the grapes to achieve optimal ripeness, and careful canopy management protected the fruit from a couple of heat waves in late August and September. Most of the crop was harvested in mid-October during an intense two-week period taking advantage of the warmth in October and before the early November rains.

Vineyard

The Poetry Vineyard, carved into a steep west-facing hillside, reaches from the highest elevations of the Stags Leap District appellation to the valley floor. This vineyard draws its uniqueness from shallow soils atop fractured shale. Due to the stressful nature of the site, the small vines develop slowly and yield small flavorful berries.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked into small bins in the cool darkness of early morning and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered hand sorting process. The fruit was gently gravity-delivered to tank and wooden *cuvés* by our unique crane system, which kept a high percentage of whole berries intact. Cold soaks lasted approximately five to eight days and fermentations were managed through a combination of pumpovers and *délestage*. Extended maceration of up to five weeks ensured exceptional extraction and fine-tuning of tannin profiles. Finally, the blend underwent twenty-four months of *élevage* in new French oak.

Tasting Notes

Enticing aromas of black cherry, red and black currant, and ripe, red plum are enhanced by hints of dried flowers, fennel seed, and sage. Compelling layers of dark berries, bittersweet chocolate, espresso, and Madagascar vanilla coat the palate with velvety tannins. The powerful concentration of this rich wine is balanced by vibrant minerality reminiscent of warm slate and graphite. This captivating wine celebrates the remarkable Poetry vineyard with its finesse and approachability, yet reveals layers of complexity and intense concentration as it evolves in the glass or with cellar age.

Analysis

Composition: 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 16% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 3% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Malbec
Alcohol: 14.9%
Bottling Date: November 2012
Release Date: October 2013
Production: 528 cases