

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2012 CLIFF LEDE “POETRY” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner 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 2012 vintage was a glorious year for Napa Valley. A frost-free and uniform bud break was followed by steady spring weather during flowering, allowing for even fruit set. Summer conditions were moderate, with warm days, cool nights, and minimal heat spikes, ideal for slow and steady grape maturation. The wines are showing exceptional balance with concentrated, ripe fruit complemented by bright acidity and supple, yet intense, structure. Skillful crop thinning and an early autumn of consistently warm days helped the vineyards achieve optimal ripeness.

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, volcanic soils atop fractured shale. Due to the stressful nature of the site, planted with high vine density and farmed to very low yields, the vines develop slowly and produce small flavorful berries.

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 pumpovers and *délestage*. Extended maceration of up to six weeks ensured exceptional extraction and fine-tuning of tannin profiles. Following eighteen months of *élevage* in new French oak, the blend was selected from our best lots of the Poetry Vineyard.

Wine Profile

Beautiful and expressive, the 2012 Poetry bouquet emanates aromas of crushed blackberry, wild Maine blueberry, and Luxardo cherry. Layered with exotic spices of anise, cardamom, and a hint of white pepper, the flavors continue to reveal their complexity with black tea, sandalwood, and dried tobacco notes. This lush and seamless wine is a sensual experience from start to finish, from rare fruit and spice flavors to suede-like tannins and loads of crushed rock minerality. This powerful wine is delicious now, with decades of potential.

Analysis

Composition: 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot
Alcohol: 15.2%
Bottling Date: July 2014
Release Date: October 2015
Production: 762 cases