

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2015 Cliff Lede “Poetry” 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 2015 vintage was a wonderfully classic year for Napa Valley wines. A dry winter, followed by warm spring temperatures, led to an early bud break that set the stage for one of the earliest harvests on record. Crop levels were lower than average due to dry conditions and a cool weather spell during flowering. The dry soils led to low vigor vines and small berries, creating very concentrated fruit. With lovely summer weather, it was our earliest harvest on record and the red wines we produced are opulent, voluptuous wines with incredible intensity.

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. The vineyard was designed by David Abreu and planted to legendary, proprietary heritage selections of Cabernet Sauvignon.

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. Following twenty-one months of *élevage* in French oak barrels, 80% of which were new, the blend was selected from our best lots of the Poetry Vineyard.

Winemaker Notes

Our *Grand Vin* was sculpted in a vintage where only the smallest of clusters and berries were produced by the hillside vines. That chiseled concentration is reflected in its tightly wound character. Youthful and primary, the nose on the fledgling 2015 Poetry is all crushed rock and cool slate. There are pretty violets among the mineral aromas with black currant, lavender, and spice box notes unfurling out along the bouquet. The summer blackberry and licorice flavors pour over the palate in a well delineated fashion and persist long after each taste. This wine tastes like it will last forever.

-Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition: 83% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Cabernet Franc, 4% Merlot, and 1% Petit Verdot
Bottling Date: July 2017
Release Date: September 2018
Production: 763 cases