

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

NAPA VALLEY

2018 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, CALISTOGA

Vintage

The 2018 vintage was a glorious growing year for Napa Valley. A frost-free and uniform bud break was followed by steady spring weather during flowering, allowing for an even and generous fruit set. Summer conditions were moderate, with warm days and cool nights, ideal for slow and steady grape maturation. Optimal ripeness was achieved thanks to an early autumn of consistently warm, but not hot, days. The pristine ripening conditions allowed for very intense fruit flavor concentrations. The wines show exceptional balance with concentrated, ripe fruit complemented by bright acidity and supple, yet intense, structure.

Vineyards

Located at the base of Diamond Mountain in the western portion of the Calistoga appellation, our Calistoga estate vineyard has twenty acres planted mostly to Cabernet Sauvignon. The gravelly loam soils are volcanic in origin with alluvial influence made evident by copious amounts of water-rolled gravel and large cobbles. While Calistoga can experience quite hot daytime temperatures, our estate is protected from the afternoon sun by Diamond Mountain to our west. Cool breezes from the Pacific are drawn in by the narrow gap between Napa and Sonoma Counties, further mediating the hot days. The result is powerful, rich Cabernet with balanced acidity.

Winemaking

Hand harvested in the cool dark of night, the fruit was brought to the winery and subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, including our cutting-edge optical sorter, with a goal of eliminating less-than-perfect berries. The selected fruit was gently delivered to tank via gravity by our crane system, retaining perfect, whole berries. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days, and fermentations were managed by a combination of *délestage* and pump overs. Extended maceration, ranging from three to four weeks, fine-tuned tannin profiles, allowing us to build structure and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 82% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

A dark and brooding wine, the 2018 Calistoga is an aromatic amalgam of seductive floral and soil elements. There are candied violets, lavender, rosemary flower notes that weave throughout the bouquet, but with time, loamy soil, rocks, and petrichor scents permeate the fragrance. The flavors are a multitudinous array of black winter truffle, cocoa, licorice, with hints of new leather and cumin spiced grilled steak. Fresh acidity carries the precise, almost effortless finish along, while the copious flavors intermingle and tempt the lucky taster for another sip. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition:	95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Merlot
Alcohol:	15.1%
Bottling Date:	July 2020
Release Date:	October 2021
Production:	517 Cases