

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

NAPA VALLEY

2018 CLIFF LEDE “HIGH FIDELITY” RED WINE, NAPA VALLEY

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner 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 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

The Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon in this blend are from our Twin Peaks estate vineyard, while the Cabernet Franc hails from acclaimed viticulturist David Abreu’s Madrona Ranch. The vineyards are farmed with meticulous attention to detail, maintaining yields at sparse levels—ranging from two to three tons per acre. The wine is composed of just a few of our best lots from these most cherished sites.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours. The freshly-harvested fruit immediately underwent rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, which included our cutting-edge optical sorter. Whole berries were gently delivered by gravity to tank using our crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately seven days, and fermentations were managed via a combination of *délestage*, pumpovers, and punchdowns. Extended maceration ranging from four to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, allowing us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 66% of which was new, for twenty-two months.

Winemaker Notes

Dark ruby colored, the 2018 High Fidelity displays a succulent assortment of complex and intriguing aromas and flavors. It starts with a fragrance of sage, steeped Oolong black tea, rhubarb, and melted black licorice notes. There’s a rush of red currants, fruitcake, cinnamon candies, and black truffle flavors across the palate. The texture is fine and complete and essence of tobacco leaf, minerals, and salted caramel glide across the lush fresh finish. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 50% Cabernet Franc, 25% Merlot, 23% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Petit Verdot
Alcohol: 15.4%
Production: 1,142 cases
Bottling Date: July 2020
Release Date: February 2021