

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

NAPA VALLEY

2017 CLIFF LEDE “SONGBOOK” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, NAPA VALLEY

Vintage

The Vintners won't soon forget the 2017 vintage in Napa Valley. A wet winter provided welcome relief from a prolonged drought that began with the 2012 vintage. Spring arrived early, bringing with it warm weather and soaking rains that segued to an early budbreak and the development of beautiful canopies. The season trended warm and was punctuated with a series of heat waves, the most dramatic one over Labor Day weekend. The well-developed and meticulously manicured canopies, along with strategically placed shade cloth, protected the natural acidity and delicate fruit flavors during the warm spells. All of the fruit was harvested well ahead of the fires and the resulting wines are laden with lively fruit flavors and voluptuous body.

Vineyards

Songbook is sourced from two of acclaimed viticulturist David Abreu's personally-farmed properties: Thorevilos Vineyard, situated between the St. Helena and Howell Mountain AVAs, and Madrona Ranch, nestled in the foothills of the Mayacamas mountain range. These vineyards produce grapes of exceptional character resulting from proprietary clones, extremely low yields, and meticulous farming. The result is a winemaker's dream.

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. This wine underwent twenty-one months of *élevage* in French oak barrels, 66% of which are new.

Winemaker Notes

The 2017 Songbook is a wonderful example of how the synthesis of great terroir and exquisite farming can create legendary wines in difficult vintages. The Madrona Ranch components lend gravel notes and pure cassis, wild blackberry, bay laurel, and liquorice root aromas and flavors. The Thorevilos Vineyard lots add damson plum, warm mission fig, juniper, and talc. Precise and well defined, this young wine exudes a confidence and purity on the palate. The lasting finish struts with an array of citrus botanicals, beef blood, and the spices anise, cinnamon, and coriander. - Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition: 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc
Bottled: July 2019
Release: March 2021
Production: 396 cases