

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

NAPA VALLEY

2018 CLIFF LEDE “SONGBOOK” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, NAPA VALLEY

Songbook represents a collection of vineyard sources that we have been fortunate enough to access to create this beautiful wine. When Cliff Lede was new to Napa Valley in the early 2000s, he was introduced to some of the top growers and consultants in this small community, creating fast friendships and partnerships. We are grateful to work with many grower partners who, like us, take pride in farming to the highest level.

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

2018 Songbook is sourced from two acclaimed Napa Valley vineyards: 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, 76% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

Our 2018 Songbook is simmering with coiled energy, and beneath its dark purple rim lies a gorgeous young elixir waiting to blossom. A chorus of currants, black licorice, bay laurel, walnut, and cedar fill the glass and are braided into a perfume of rose, melted tar, chocolate, and black truffles. Flavors of cassis, amaretto, black cherry, fruitcake, and mineral present across the broad-shouldered palate. It finishes on a long, silky, polished frame, while an encore of loam, wintergreen, and autumn leaf aromatic notes.

- Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, 7% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc
Bottled: July 2020
Release: March 2022
Production: 556 cases