

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2022 CLIFF LEDE “CROSSFADE” RED WINE, NAPA VALLEY

Cliff Lede Vineyards is a family-owned and operated winery located in the famed Stags Leap District. For over 20 years, Cliff Lede Vineyards has prioritized crafting wines of extraordinary quality with authenticity and sustainability in mind.

Vintage

Warm temperatures in February and March jumpstarted an early 2022 growing season. Early budbreak often comes with the vulnerability to frost, but luckily our vines suffered no damage during the cool spring nights. Early irrigations were necessary to set up healthy canopies and the vines set an average crop after an uneventful bloom period. The uniform and even clusters needed little thinning, and attention was paid to sculpting the shoots and laterals to ensure adequate shading and airflow throughout the fruiting positions. Late August was hot, and September was forecasted to be hotter, so we began picking in rapid succession before the heat wave to preserve the fresh acidities and delicate aromatics already present in the grapes.

Vineyards

The Cabernet Franc in this wine hails from our prestigious Poetry Vineyard and acclaimed viticulturist David Abreu’s Madrona Ranch Vineyard. Our beloved estate vineyard in Calistoga provides most of the Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend. 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 *delestage*, 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, 71% of which were new, for twenty-two months.

Winemaker Notes

Deep purple-colored, the 2022 Crossfade’s charming panoply of spice and boysenberry aromas burst from the glass. A co-fermented lot of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc plays the leading role, sending forth a whirlwind of black fig, pipe tobacco, iron, dried leaves, and cassis notes. Upon entry, there are notes of black licorice and roasted sweet red pepper. The midpalate reveals a wave of malted chocolate and hazelnut that rides out along the soft finish of this unique and singular wine. — Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Cabernet Franc, 4% Merlot, 2% Petit Verdot, 1% Malbec
Alcohol: 13.8%
Production: 637 cases
Bottling Date: July 2024
Release Date: October 2024