

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2014 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, BECKSTOFFER TO KALON VINEYARD, NAPA VALLEY

Vintage

The 2014 vintage was a vintner's dream. A dry winter with unseasonably warm temperatures prompted an early bud break, leading to one of the earliest harvests on record. Moderate weather throughout the spring and summer allowed the vines to achieve a good set. The dry conditions led to low vigor vines and small, abundant berries, creating very concentrated fruit that ripened with the warm fall days. With lovely autumn weather, harvest proceeded at a steady pace.

Vineyards

Situated on the western Oakville bench, the vaunted Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard has gravelly loam soils with high mineral content derived from sedimentary deposits of the volcanic Mayacamas Mountains and the alluvial fan of the Napa River. The vineyard has low organic matter content and thorough drainage, which devigorates the vines and produces small berries that are ideal for wines with intense concentration. The site is warm and sunny throughout the day, but cooled by late afternoon breezes, producing ripe Cabernet Sauvignon with lovely acidity. The blocks that make up our blend represent a diverse array of the Beckstoffer To Kalon terroir and clonal selection, creating a unique and extraordinary wine from this praised site.

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 and wooden *cuvés* 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, 62% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

As always, the terroir of the Beckstoffer To Kalon vineyard is on full display in the bouquet, which is laced with gravelly loam and crushed mineral notes. Intertwined with the earthy, stony accents are the classic violet and cassis aromas that are representative of this grand cru vineyard. The 2014 vintage has an aromatic profile of crushed blackberry, raspberry, and black licorice layered with California bay laurel leaf, roasted red beet, and grilled beef notes. Bright acidity freshens the entry, and, as the wine cascades on the palate, the creamy tannins play along the tongue in a precise and pristine fashion. Rich, dark chocolate and baking spice coat the palate, while flavors of black fig and blueberry complement the elegant texture and full body. -Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 619 cases
Bottling Date: July 2016
Release Date: April 2017