

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2018 CLIFF LEDE "MAGIC NIGHTS" CABERNET SAUVIGNON, ROCK BLOCK SERIES, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

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

Our estate vineyard blocks are named after Cliff's favorite rock songs and albums. The name of this blend is derived from The Who's "Magic Bus" in our Poetry vineyard and from The Moody Blues' "Nights in White Satin" in our Twin Peaks vineyard. The Cabernet Sauvignon in "Magic Bus" is planted in shallow volcanic soil and farmed to low yields, contributing structure, concentration and classic Stags Leap character to the backbone of the blend. "Nights in White Satin" is a block of Merlot that contributes a luxurious perfume, flavors of ripe, dark fruit, and plush texture.

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, 80% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

It's as dark as midnight and delights the taster with deep rich cassis, candied violets, lilacs, blackberry, warm summer mulberries, and melted black licorice. The wine possesses a weighty, oily texture reminiscent of melted chocolate, grilled steak drippings, iron, fig, and medjool dates. The tannins are satin smooth with the elegance and energy of the vintage taking center stage on the finish. – Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition:	92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot, and 3% Merlot
Production:	2,180 cases
Bottling Date:	July 2020
Release Date:	April 2020

These go to eleven.