

# CLIFF LEDE

## VINEYARDS

### 2021 CLIFF LEDE “DIAMOND SKY” RED WINE, ROCK BLOCK SERIES, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

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

The 2021 growing season was beset by a very dry winter. The valley received only half of the average rainfall. Because of the winter drought, our experienced vineyard crew began irrigation before bud break in the rockiest soils and set about crafting canopies that would protect and ripen the fruit to perfection. Although dry, the mild weather during April’s budbreak helped establish healthy shoot and leaf growth throughout May into June. Mid-June saw some of the hottest days of the year, but thankfully they were accompanied by cold nights which tempered their effects. Foggy mornings and warm sunny afternoons in August and September ushered in an early harvest of pristine and flavorful grapes. The wines are imbued with a bright fresh acidity provided by the ample, shading canopies, along with the ripeness and allure of a droughty growing season.

#### Vineyards

Our estate vineyard blocks are named after Cliff’s favorite rock songs and albums. The name of this blend is derived from Pink Floyd’s “Shine on You Crazy Diamond” and Electric Light Orchestra’s “Mr. Blue Sky.” We utilize both the gravelly, alluvial soils of our Rhythm Vineyard and the steep, rocky volcanic slopes of the Poetry Vineyard to create this unique blend.

#### 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, 88% of which were new.

#### Winemaker Notes

Almost pitch black, the inky 2021 Diamond Sky’s opaque violet color coats the glass, and broody scents of crème de cassis, blackberry, and warm plum waft invitingly. Dark fruit flavors intertwine with clove, coriander, and anise spice notes across the entry. Generous doses of the dark and shadowy Petit Verdot and Malbec varietals lend this wild exotic notes of blood orange, red roses, dark chocolate, and mincemeat pie. This young, coiled wine finishes long, with vibrant, fresh acidity and supportive tannin. “Now there’s a look in your eyes, like black holes in the sky. Shine on you crazy diamond.” -Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

#### Analysis

Composition:	62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Petit Verdot, 17% Malbec, and 1% Merlot
Alcohol:	14.2%
Production:	945 cases
Bottling Date:	July 2023
Release Date:	April 2024

**These go to eleven.**