

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2023 CLIFF LEDE “INTERGALACTIC RAIN” CABERNET SAUVIGNON, ROCK BLOCK SERIES, 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

A healthy and generous winter rainfall season returned to Napa in 2023. 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 foggy mornings and cool nights, ideal for slow and steady grape maturation. The wines show exceptional balance with concentrated, ripe fruit complemented by bright acidity and supple, yet profound, structure. Optimal ripeness was achieved thanks to an early autumn of consistently warm days. The pristine ripening conditions allowed intense fruit flavor concentration.

Vineyards

Our estate vineyard blocks are named after Cliff's favorite rock songs and albums, a tradition that now continues with his son, Jason. What began with Cliff's original vision has grown into a multigenerational soundtrack that shapes the character of the estate. The name of this blend draws inspiration from two iconic tracks: “Intergalactic” by the Beastie Boys and “Purple Rain” by Prince. Sourced predominantly from both the gravelly, alluvial soils of our Rhythm Vineyard and the steep, rocky volcanic slopes of the Poetry Vineyard, this wine harmonizes distinct terroirs into a singular, expressive blend, much like the layered energy of the songs that inspired it.

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 innovative 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, 50% of which were new.

Winemaker Notes

The 2023 Intergalactic Rain is a titan of depth, pouring a saturated, opaque purple that heavily coats the glass. The nose is an evocative collision of petrichor and coal dust, evolving into notes of toasted spice and savory herbs like cardamom, sage, and rosemary. The palate flaunts a structural density, defined by slate and graphite. These inky elements are seamlessly woven into rich layers of cassis, warm summer mulberries, and raspberries. Beneath the fruit lies a sophisticated umami core reminiscent of seaweed wrapper and lingering smoke. Finely grained, polished tannins drive a persistent finish, balancing the wine's massive power with a velvety, supple crescendo. - Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 82% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 8% Petit Verdot, 1% Malbec
Alcohol: 13.8%
Production: 1,431 cases
Bottling Date: July 2025
Release Date: April 2026

These go to eleven.