

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2015 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, CALISTOGA

Vintage

The 2015 vintage was a wonderfully classic year for Napa Valley wines. A dry winter, followed by warm spring temperatures, led to an early bud break that set the stage for one of the earliest harvests on record. Crop levels were lower than average due to dry conditions and a cool weather spell during flowering. The dry soils led to low vigor vines and small berries, creating very concentrated fruit. With lovely summer weather, it was our earliest harvest on record and the red wines we produced are opulent, voluptuous wines with incredible concentration.

Vineyards

Located at the base of Diamond Mountain in the western portion of the Calistoga appellation, our Calistoga estate vineyard has twenty acres of vineyard planted mostly to Cabernet Sauvignon. The gravelly loam soils are volcanic in origin with alluvial influence made evident by copious amounts of water-rolled gravel and large cobbles. While Calistoga can experience quite hot daytime temperatures, our estate is protected from the afternoon sun by Diamond Mountain to our west. Cool breezes from the Pacific are drawn in by the narrow gap between Napa and Sonoma Counties, further mediating the hot days. The result is powerful, rich Cabernet with balanced acidity.

Winemaking

Hand harvested in the cool dark of night, the fruit was brought to the winery and subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered sorting process, including our cutting edge optical sorter, with a goal of eliminating less-than-perfect berries. The selected fruit was gently delivered to tank via gravity by our crane system, retaining perfect, whole berries. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days, and fermentations were managed by a combination of *délestage* and pump overs. Extended maceration, ranging from three to four weeks, fine-tuned tannin profiles, allowing us to build structure and wine complexity. The wine was aged in French oak barrels, 65% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

Our incredible 2015 Calistoga is an impenetrably opaque purple hued wine that is full of wild blackberries and cassis. This vineyard's telltale aroma of truffle and grilled steak drippings is here, but it is hidden at this young stage under a snug blanket of spring flowers and mineral scents. Candied violets, warm pebbles, and graphite are all registered in the wondrous aromas and flavors. The luscious wine stretches out fat and wide along the palate and finishes with a fireworks display of fine tannin and bright acidity that captures the essence of the amazing Cabernet terroir of western Calistoga. – Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Analysis

Composition:	94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Petit Verdot, 2% Merlot
Alcohol:	15.2%
Bottling Date:	July 2017
Release Date:	October 2018
Production:	549 Cases