

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2015 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

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

Exceptional high-elevation vineyards in the Howell Mountain appellation produce intensely concentrated grapes for this wine. Soils are volcanic in origin and consist of two main types; the first is decomposed volcanic ash called tufa, and the second is red volcanic rock and clay that is high in iron. Both are nutrient poor, which stresses the vines, producing intense and structured wines from small clusters and berries. The altitude, climate, and soils combine to create a classic mountain Cabernet Sauvignon with incredible concentration, texture, and structure.

Winemaking

Hand harvested in the cool early morning hours, the fruit was immediately 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, 72% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

The 2015 Howell Mountain is enchanting and captivating from the start. Dark cassis flavors are infused with notes of pine cone and forest sous bois. Roasted chestnuts and steak au jus aromas unwind in the glass and subtle accents of dried red currant, Spanish paprika, cumin, crushed rose petal, clove, and mint intertwine amongst the fragrance. The piquant mountain tannins round and fatten along the finish and build support and structure this young vibrant Cabernet. -Christopher Tynan, Winemaker

Composition:	98% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Merlot
Alcohol:	14.8%
Production:	580 cases
Bottling Date:	July 2017
Release Date:	October 2018