

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2019 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

Vintage

The 2019 vintage was a magnificent year for Napa Valley. A frost-free and uniform bud break was followed by a cool wet spring that included three inches of rain in May. Luckily, the rain didn't affect set and the weather turned warm and sunny for the duration of spring. Welcome warm nights in June, July, and August caught maturation back on schedule. Summer conditions were moderate, with warm days and cool nights, ideal for slow and steady grape maturation. The wine shows exceptional balance with concentrated, ripe fruit complemented by bright acidity and supple, yet intense, structure. 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.

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, 60% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

The 2019 Howell Mountain comes sauntering out of the glass like a thoroughbred and will absolutely thrill high elevation purists. This exceptional vintage sports loads of dark berries, spring flowers, cigar wrapper, and cinnamon that unfurl in the glass and are layered with graphite, pine bark, and dense cassis flavors. This full-bodied mountain wine is tightly wound around an abundance of lively powdery tannins, balanced acidity, and concentrated flavors. - Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Composition:	91% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 1% Cabernet Franc, 1% Petit Verdot
Alcohol:	14.6%
Bottling Date:	July 2021
Release Date:	December 2022
Production:	646 cases