

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2022 CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

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

Warm temperatures in February and March jumpstarted an early 2022 growing season. Early budbreak often comes with the vulnerability to frost, but luckily our vines suffered no damage during the cool spring nights. Early irrigations were necessary to set up healthy canopies and the vines set an average crop after an uneventful bloom period. The uniform and even clusters needed little thinning, and attention was paid to sculpting the shoots and laterals to ensure adequate shading and airflow throughout the fruiting positions. Late August was hot, and September was forecasted to be hotter, therefore we began picking in rapid succession to preserve the fresh acidities and delicate aromatics already present in the grapes.

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, to eliminate 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, 52% of which were new, for twenty-one months.

Winemaker Notes

Dark and beguiling, the 2022 Howell Mountain leaps from the glass with red and black currant, loamy forest floor aromas, and notes of white pepper. Black forest cake, nori, and savory bone broth flavors wrap around the energizing and fresh blackberry, and fig notes on the palate. Finishing long and harmoniously, the depth of this wine is accented with cooling bay laurel and sage aromas that are carried out with soft integrated tannins. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition:	88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot
Alcohol:	13.8%
Production:	571 cases
Bottling Date:	July 2024
Release Date:	October 2024