

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2021 CLIFF LEDE “MARLA” BLANC, NAPA VALLEY

Vintage

The 2021 growing season was beset by a very dry winter. The valley received only half of the average rainfall that traditionally falls in the winter months. Because of the winter drought, our experienced vineyard crew began irrigation before bud break in the rockiest soils and set about crafting canopies that would protect and ripen the fruit to perfection. Although dry, the mild weather during April's budbreak helped establish healthy shoot and leaf growth throughout May into June. Mid-June saw some of the hottest days of the year, but thankfully they were accompanied by cold nights which tempered their effects. Foggy mornings and warm sunny afternoons in August and September ushered in an early harvest of pristine and flavorful white grapes. The wines are imbued with a bright fresh acidity provided by the ample, shading canopies, along with the ripeness and allure of a droughty growing season.

Vineyards

A selection of our finest estate and grower white wine barrels were blended to create the highest expression of the vintage. An old-vine Sémillon vineyard in Calistoga contributes density, richness, and lemon curd flavors and aromas to the blend. A historic vineyard site in Chiles Valley planted to Sauvignon Vert adds complex stone fruit and an earthy minerality. Our fabulous young estate-grown Sauvignon Blanc and Sauvignon Musqué vines from our properties in the Stags Leap District and Calistoga add sumptuous orchard fruit flavors, delicate floral notes, and mouthwatering acidity to the blend.

Winemaking

The fruit was hand-harvested in the cool darkness of night and arrived at the winery at dawn. The grapes were then held in controlled conditions of low oxygen and cold temperatures. Our fruit underwent gentle, whole-cluster pressing which released the delicate, prized juices from the clusters and created a deeper level of complexity. The juice was fermented in new French oak barrels. All fermentations were conducted at cold temperatures to preserve the freshness of the fruit. Upon reaching dryness, the wine was aged on its lees and select barrels underwent occasional *battonage*.

Winemaker Notes

A beautiful golden yellow hue, the 2021 Marla's understated elegance gracefully blossoms with time in the glass. An ethereal fragrance of pear tart, Gravenstein apple, beeswax, Li Hing spiced pineapple, and orange oil emerges and weaves effortlessly atop the bouquet. Mineral notes abound and are laden with hints of cool wet gravel, powdered chalk, and flint. Tiers of tangy lemon candy and Kaffir lime flavors intertwine with delicate citrus flowers and mint leaf. This is a seamlessly pure wine with a tensioned, tightly woven, and classic structure complemented by mouth-watering salinity and an effortlessly lithe finish.

– Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 91% Sémillon, 6% Sauvignon Vert, & 3% Sauvignon Blanc

Alcohol: 12.8%

Production: 60 cases

Bottling Date: March 2022

Release Date: September 2022