

CLIFF LEDE

VINEYARDS

2023 CLIFF LEDE CHARDONNAY, NAPA VALLEY

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

A healthy and generous winter rainfall season returned to Napa in 2023. A frost-free and uniform bud break was followed by steady spring weather during flowering, allowing for an even and generous fruit set. Summer conditions were moderate, with foggy mornings, 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 profound, structure. Optimal ripeness was achieved thanks to an early autumn of consistently warm days. The pristine ripening conditions allowed for intense fruit flavor concentrations.

Vineyards

Our 87-acre High Fidelity vineyard in Carneros was added to our estate in 2019. The vineyard is comprised of clay and loam-based soils and boasts an exposed flat section on the east side with rolling hills to the west. The Chardonnay sections are planted to clones selected from historic California vineyards that have produced legendary wines for over one hundred years. The Wente, Hyde, Robert Young, and Mt. Eden clones each give the wine a different layer of complexity and highlight the cool climate of Carneros and our native soils.

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 low oxygen and cold temperatures. Gentle, whole-cluster pressing released the delicate, prized juices and created a deeper level of complexity. The juice was fermented in 85% 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 lots underwent occasional *bâtonnage*.

Winemaker Notes

In the inaugural 2023 Chardonnay from our estate vineyard in Carneros, wafts of Anjou pear, crisp Gravenstein apple, and white flowers dance invitingly atop the glass. Nutmeg, buttery croissant, lime, and luscious confit peach flavors float across the palate gracefully. The racy acidity keeps a spine of freshness running through the finish and a crescendo of wet stone and marzipan leads to an enticing satiny finish. – Christopher Tynan, Director of Winemaking

Analysis

Composition: 100% Chardonnay
Alcohol: 13.6%
Production: 605 cases
Bottling Date: July 2024
Release Date: October 2024