

2005 CINNAMON STARDUST, STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Established in 2002, Cliff Lede Vineyards encompasses sixty acres in the famed Stags Leap District. Owner Cliff Lede, viticulturalist David Abreu, Winemaker Michelle Edwards, and winemaking consultant Michel Rolland have come together to form an unrivalled team, making the most of this remarkable property.

Vintage

The cool, dry conditions at the start of 2005 were quickly replaced by a prolonged period of warm, wet weather throughout spring. Tepid, damp soils promoted continuous vine growth, while ideal temperatures during bloom ensured perfect fruit set. An excessive crop load loomed, so early and repetitive thinning was necessary. A lack of adverse weather during fall ripening allowed us to pursue record hang times, in some instances leaving fruit out to ripen on the vines into November. The result was a large harvest of exceptional quality, producing wines of unusual depth, complexity, and a clean sophisticated elegance not seen in recent vintages.

Vineyards

The majority of this fruit was sourced from two distinctive blocks named Cinnamon Girl and Ziggy Stardust, both located on the Poetry hillside vineyard. Despite their geographic juxtaposition, the soils of these two blocks demonstrate stark contrasts, which are aptly reflected in the wine's complex profile. Yields from these blocks were low, from 1.9 to 2.4 tons per acre.

Winemaking

Grapes were picked in the darkness of the early morning hours, and immediately subjected to rigorous selection by our three-tiered hand-sorting process. The berries were gently delivered to tank by our unique crane system, minimizing disruption of berry integrity. Cold soaks lasted approximately five days and fermentations were managed via a combination of *delestage* and pumpovers. Extended maceration from three to five weeks fine-tuned our tannin profiles, and allowed us to perfect mouth feel and wine complexity. This Cabernet Sauvignon underwent eighteen months of *elevage* in 75% new French oak and 25% neutral French oak.

Winemaker Notes

The 2005 Cinnamon Stardust opens with a panoply of wild and exotic aromas; essences of hazelnut, blackcurrant, rosemary, and cypress resin boldly comingle with balsam, mulberry, and vetiver. The palate displays a rich mix of dark fruits and spices, all vying for center stage. Tamarind, huckleberry, creosote, and rose oils sully the palate in harmonious equilibrium, like the sensorial equivalent of David Bowie jamming with Neil Young and Crazyhorse. Edgy, complex, and subtle flavors continue in a bold fat finish that persists well into the coda.

Analysis

Composition:	88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Merlot, 4% Malbec, 3% Petit Verdot
Alcohol:	15.2 %
Bottled:	June 2007
Release:	May 1, 2008
Production:	619 cases