

Plaisir de Merle Cabernet Sauvignon 2006

Colour: Dark Ruby with a deep blackish/purple tint.

Bouquet: Lots of red berry flavours with a delicious combination of plums, prunes, vanilla and dark chocolate in the background.

Taste: Full - bodied with dark chocolate and ripe fruit backed by spices and soft tannins.

Very versatile, this wine would best complement all red meat dishes.

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

winery : Plaisir Wine Estate

winemaker : Niel Bester

wine of origin : Coastal

analysis : alc : 14.65 % vol rs : 2.2 g/l pH : 3.49 ta : 6.2 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

ageing : Will mature well for ten years or more.

in the vineyard : **Background**

A Distell showpiece, this 974 hectare estate in Simondium, Paarl, has earned international acclaim for its white and red wines. Winemaker Niel Bester attributes the benefits of not only working with great fruit coming from a very unique terrain, but also getting the valuable input from Dr Paul Pontallier, MD at Chateau Margaux. Producing wines that are classically styled and accessible, is the goal for all involved on this historic farm established in 1693.

The vineyards

The diversity of the soils, slopes and elevations is closely linked with the quality of Plaisir de Merle wines. Well-drained weathered granite soils with good water retention allow minimal interference in irrigation with most vineyards dry land. In a season where dry conditions played a significant role in the ripening of the grapes, it was evident how the vineyards benefited from the moisture that seeps down the slopes to feed the roots.

Situated on the east and northeast facing slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain, Plaisir de Merle is bordered by the towns of Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Paarl. The vineyards, between 7 - 18 years of age, are located between 180m and 400m above sea level where high mountain peaks shade the vineyards from the hot, late afternoon sun. This slows down ripening, resulting in wines with a very typically rich fruit complexity and well-ripened tannins.

Viticulturist: Hannes van Rensburg

about the harvest: The grapes were harvested from 22 February to 30 May from six different vineyards at between 23.1° and 25.5° Balling.

in the cellar : The grapes were destalked and fermented in stainless steel tanks. The juice was pumped over the skins daily to extract colour, tannins and flavour. Once fermentation was completed, the wine was left on the skins for a further 5 - 10 days to macerate. The wine was racked off the skins and malolactic fermentation was completed, partially in barrels and in the tanks. The wine was then racked and transferred to French oak barrels to mature for 12 - 16 months. Apart from Niel's selection of various Cabernets to support his style he added small quantities of Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Shiraz and Malbec for that extra touch in perfecting the blend.

