

Plaisir de Merle Merlot 2009

Colour: Ruby.

Bouquet: Teeming with violets, strawberries, blackberries, blackcurrant and sweet vanilla notes.

Taste: Medium to full-bodied with a soft and velvety palate laced with ripe fruit and supported by vanilla oak flavours.

Made to compliment most food dishes, this Merlot will especially compliment venison, pot roasts and other lightly spiced meat dishes.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Plaisir Wine Estate

winemaker : Niel Bester

wine of origin : Paarl

analysis : alc : 14.04 % vol rs : 1.4 g/l pH : 3.61 ta : 6.2 g/l va : 0.45 g/l

type : Red **style** : Dry **body** : Full **wooded**

pack : Bottle **closure** : Cork

2012 SAA On-board Wine Selection: Premium Class

ageing : Accessible now, this wine has good maturing potential for 5 - 8 years.

in the vineyard :

Background

Established by the French Huguenots in 1693 on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountains between Paarl and Franschoek, Plaisir de Merle is a rare gem.

A Distell showpiece, this 974 hectare estate in Simondium, Paarl, has earned international acclaim for its white and red wines.

About 400 hectares are planted with a variety of noble grape cultivars such as Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Shiraz and Malbec. An area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar. Winemaker Niel Bester, who has gained fame in producing classically styled yet accessible wines, attributes the success of his wines to being able to work with great fruit coming from a very unique terrain, as well as the valuable input from his viticulture team.

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 irrigation with most vineyards dry land. The grapes were chosen and handpicked from three vineyards. Starting on February 9 and ending on March 27! They are situated between 300m and 370m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg. The result is a combination of floral notes, ripe red berry fruit and minerality from the granite which is evident in every glass.

Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

about the harvest: The grapes were harvested at between 24.4° - 25.7° Balling.

in the cellar : After harvesting the grapes were fermented in stainless steel tanks at 25°C for 9 days. The juice was pumped over the skins daily until dry. Upon completion of fermentation the wine was left on the skins for about eight days to macerate. The wine was racked off and malolactic fermentation was completed in the tanks and barrels. The wine was matured in 50% new, 25% second-fill and 25% third-fill French oak barrels for periods ranging from 12 to 16 months. Finally all the individual barrels were tasted and evaluated to select the final blend.

