

## Ernie Els Big Easy (RED) 2010

The Big Easy 2010 is richer, fuller and more bombastic than previous vintages. An alluring kaleidoscope of black fruits, Christmas cake, liquorice and cinnamon tempt your nose, leading to a dense and full-bodied palate. Abound with spice from the dominant Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon adds punchy tannins and a robust structure. Floral and savoury notes from Mourvèdre, Cinsaut and Vigonier all contribute to the exotic rhythm of the Big Easy. Finally rounded-off by the gentle, sweet-fruited finish from a dash of comforting Grenache.

**variety :** Shiraz | 60% Shiraz, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Mourvedre, 6% Grenache, 5% Cinsaut, 3% Viognier

**winery :** Ernie Els Wines

**winemaker :** Louis Strydom

**wine of origin :**

**analysis :** alc : 14.5 % vol   rs : 3.7 g/l   pH : 3.62   ta : 6.1 g/l

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

**pack :** Bottle   **size :** 750ml   **closure :** Cork

International Wine Challenge 2012 - Commended  
Decanter World Wine Awards 2012 - Bronze Medal  
Concours Mondial de Bruxelles 2012 - Silver Medal  
Top 100 SA Wines 2012 - Best Value Award  
Wine Enthusiast magazine (USA) - 88 Points

**ageing :** Delicious now, it will swing easy for another 5 years.br /

**in the vineyard :** The 2010 vintage

What an intense year! It was extremely difficult to make predictions due to the constant fluctuations in weather conditions, with unrelenting winds prevailing almost throughout. Initially matters were quite advanced, with early bud burst, then cold weather in October and November delayed everything, and subsequently favourable conditions and the small size of the crop tended to move harvest dates forward. Production cost was high from the start and expenses per ton skyrocketed because of the decline in yield.

2009 growing season

Cool, overcast and rainy weather conditions during the induction period in October / November 2008 had an adverse effect on bunch initiation for the 2010 harvest and impacted on this year's crop. Although sufficient winter cold prevailed, the cool, wet spring caused uneven budding on Ernie Els. The season was characterised by unrelenting strong winds during October and November. The summer months were exceptionally dry and windy. Sunburn, wind and heat damage combined with downy mildew resulted in crop losses of up to 40% on certain blocks.

The harvest

The overall cool climate during the first part of ripening was beneficial for flavour retention. February and March experienced the usual sporadic heat waves. The heat wave at the beginning of March 2010 which lasted longer than a week will certainly go down in the annals. Due to the smaller crop most blocks could be picked at optimal ripeness. The decrease in volumes also meant that cellar space was often not a problem, and we could allow prolonged skin contact.

The wines

We at Ernie Els are more than satisfied with the quality of the grapes that were harvested. Grapes were healthy with good flavours and analyses. Bunches were generally looser than normal and berries smaller, with an excellent fruit to skin ratio resulting in intense colour in the red wines.



About the vineyard

Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon was sourced from the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. Grenache and Cinsaut was picked from rare, 40 year-old vines from Piekenierskloof on the West Coast. Mourvèdre and Viognier were delivered from neighbouring Stellenbosch vineyards. The diversity of the various sites shows beautiful balance on the palate.

**about the harvest:** February / March 2010 - 26.1°Brix average sugar at harvest

**in the cellar :** Cooperage: Aged for 12 months - 80% in 300 litre French oak barrels & 20% in 300 litre American oak barrels.

Production: 10,000 x 6 x 750ml cases