

## Plaisir de Merle Sauvignon Blanc 2012

Colour: Brilliant with fresh green tinges.

Bouquet: Lovely floral and passion fruit aromas, with hints of pineapple and spanspek. The enticing nose carries through to the taste and holds its own all the way.

Taste: It is fresh, full and rich with flavours of tropical fruit and nettles in the initial flavour. This follows through with mouth-filling sweet, fresh tropical flavours of passion fruit, pineapple and the typical green hints of the cultivar. It has a very long and lingering aftertaste.

Enjoy with a variety of light dishes such as a seafood salad, pastas or fish - or it's a delight served chilled on its own.

**variety** : Sauvignon Blanc | 100% Sauvignon Blanc

**winery** : Plaisir Wine Estate

**winemaker** : Niel Bester

**wine of origin** : Coastal

**analysis** : alc : 13.5 % vol    rs : 2.6 g/l    pH : 3.27    ta : 6.5 g/l

**type** : White    **style** : Dry

**pack** : Bottle    **closure** : Screwcap

2013 International Wine and Spirit Competition - Silver

2013 Decanter World Wine Awards - Gold Medal

**ageing** : This wine will develop well even after 12 to 24 months. It is beautifully aromatic, floral, crisp and fresh to enjoy now.

**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, Malbec and Pinot Noir, and an area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar. Winemaker Niel Bester who in 2012 celebrates 20 years as cellarmaster at Plaisir de Merle, has gained fame in producing classically styled yet accessible wines. He attributes the success of his wines to being able to work with great fruit coming from a very unique terrain and the invaluable input from his viticulture team.

The vintage

Although the vintage was quite dry and warm, cooler weather during the early part of the season provided ideal conditions for the ripening of the Sauvignon Blanc grapes.

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 (predominantly Tukulu and Hutton) with good water retention allow minimal irrigation and most vineyards are dry land. The Sauvignon Blanc vines on the farm, ranging in age from 11 to 15 years old, were grown in Hutton soil between 300 m and 500m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg. The Sauvignon Blanc originating from Darling came from 9-year-old vines on the northerly slopes, in deep red, well drained oakleaf soils.

Grapes were harvested by hand and sourced from three different vineyards - two on Plaisir de Merle and one in the cooler region of Darling. The late and dry vintage produced flavours such as passion fruit and tropical fruit, while the grapes from the cooler climate provided the more traditional greener characters. The result is a full



spectrum of flavours, tropical aromas, passion fruit, spanspek and some green fig.

Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

**about the harvest:** The grapes were harvested by hand at between 21.4° and 23.9°  
Balling in February.

**in the cellar :** A limited period of skin contact (virtually nothing to a maximum of four hours) with the must being settled at 4° C and kept on the fine settling lees for three days (this enriches the wine with the typical varietal flavours). The juice was fermented in stainless steel tanks at between 13° - 18° C for 21 to 22 days. The wine was left on the lees for another two months and received no wood contact.