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Cathedral Cellar Merlot 2008

This full bodied red wine has aromas of cherry, marzipan and fresh berry fruit complemented by hints of menthol and cloves. The fruit is well balanced with nuances of cedar wood and cigar box flavours due to maturation. The structure is soft, velvety and balanced with a lingering aftertaste.

Serve with roasted and grilled red meats.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot
winery : KWV Classic Collection
winemaker : The Winemaking Team
wine of origin : Western Cape
analysis : **alc :** 14.27 % vol **rs :** 3.16 g/l **pH :** 3.26 **ta :** 6.15 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Medium **taste :** Fragrant **wooded**
pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

ageing : The wine can be enjoyed immediately or cellared for up to 4 - 6 years.

in the vineyard : Vineyards
The grapes for this wine come from four different vineyards in the Stellenbosch region with altitudes varying from 50m to 560m. The unique character of each vineyard contributes to the quality of this wine. All these vineyards are trellised and meticulous foliage management ensures the optimal yield per vine as well as sufficient sunlight exposure of the grapes; both of which are critically important for Merlot fruit quality. Closer to harvest the grapes are tasted on a regular basis to assess flavour development. Harvesting will only commence once the desired flavours are achieved.

Vintage conditions
Cool, wet weather during the 2007 winter and first two months of 2008, led to a later than usual start to the 2008 harvest. This resulted in slow ripening conditions with small berries, concentrated flavours, slow sugar and phenolic development. It also led to an ideal distribution between red and white grapes being harvested, allowing winemakers the time to optimally attend to their wines. This is expected to be an excellent vintage.

about the harvest: Yield: 5 - 8 t/ha.
Grapes were harvested at optimal ripeness.
Harvest date: Middle February to end March.

in the cellar : Wine making
After destemming, the grapes were cold soaked for 4 days to extract more fruit and enhance colour. After this period the wine was inoculated with specially selected yeast strains and fermented for 7 days until dry. Free run juice was racked to barrel where it underwent malolactic fermentation. The wine was then racked from the lees and returned to the barrel for further maturation. After maturation the wine was blended, filtered and then bottled.

Maturation: In new 300 litre French oak barrels for 16 months.

Bottling date: February 2009.