

Ernie Els Signature 2009

From one of the greatest vintages in memory, the 2009 Signature is even more emphatic than before, sure to make a statement everywhere. The enthralling nose is deeply rich with a myriad of black currant, coffee and smoked meat notes. Of the 5 Bordeaux varieties, the Cabernet Franc adds lead pencil and mineral notes, with a hint of spicy oak sure to integrate with age. The palate is full-bodied and decadent, reminding one of a Belgian chocolate fondant with blackberry coulee. Etched, weighty tannins finally coat suave, lush and pure fruit complexity. Exquisitely balanced and long.

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 14.58 % vol rs : 2.1 g/l pH : 3.72 ta : 6.3 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **size :** 0 **closure :** Cork

Veritas Wine Awards 2012 - Silver Medal

ageing : It will mature well for a decade or more.br /

in the vineyard : The 2009 Vintage

After a late start winter 2008 was like the Cape winters of old; plentiful rain and cold. Early spring rains with unusually cold weather delayed budding and growth thus suggesting the harvest would be at least two weeks late; some noticeably cooler than average weather also continued throughout January 2009. After good, even budding the cold weather affected flowering and berry set, this in-turn slowed down ripening resulting in great flavour accumulation. Berry size tended to be smaller than average hence giving an excellent fruit-to-skin ratio; the makings for outstanding colour intensity. The hot weather arrived later than usual- well into February. All fruit began ripening simultaneously, putting immense pressure on space in the cellar. Also during February we had to contend with bush fires in the Stellenbosch and Helderberg mountains which burned for about 5 weeks. The crop yield was slightly down; quality was excellent nonetheless.

About the vineyard

All fruit was sourced from the Ernie Els Wines property which is situated in the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. Each variety is separately managed to create unique and varied flavour profiles for the classic, 'Medoc-style', Bordeaux blend. The warm, north-facing slopes deliver rich, full-bodied red wines. With an altitude of approximately 250 metres above sea level and the cooling influence of the Atlantic Ocean just 15 kilometres away, the ripening period is extended by up to 3 weeks.

about the harvest: The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning. Harvest: February & March 2009. 25.6° Brix average sugar at harvest.

in the cellar : On the sorting table, all excess stalks and rotten berries were removed carefully by hand. Grape bunches were gently destalked with a Bucher de-stalker and lightly crushed. Fermentation took place in 7-ton, open-top stainless steel tanks with yeast WE 372 being added to the juice. The wines were pumped-over and punched-down manually 5 times per day ensuring maximum colour extraction from the skins. After primary fermentation the maceration period was 10 - 16 days before pressing. Each variety is matured separately (micro-vinified) in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

Cooperage: Aged for 20 months - 300 litre French oak barrels (100% new).



Production: 1,185 x 6 x 750ml cases