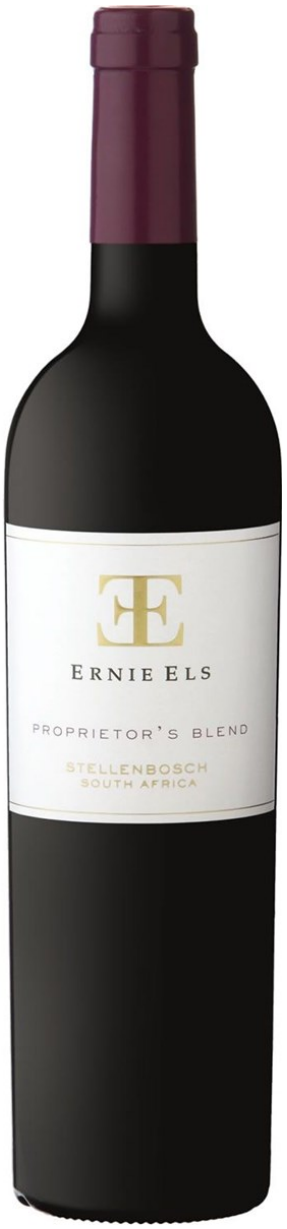
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Ernie Els Proprietor's Blend 2010

The 2010 dances in the glass with a bright purple-sheen and dense crimson body. A subtle note of toasty-oak is yet to integrate into the potent morello cherry strewn bouquet. Further complexity of graphite, salami and bacon notes balance an intense floral lift, whilst whiffs of mint and chocolate finally drift slowly through to a supple, layered palate. A lacy, sweet-fruited cassis-cocktail stuns the palate all wrapped up with rich but etched tannins on the finish. Broader than the emphatic 2009, 2010 shows more of the Bordeaux varietal mix over its savoury Shiraz component.



variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 59% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Shiraz, 6% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : **alc :** 15.01 % vol **rs :** 2.0 g/l **pH :** 3.75 **ta :** 6.3 g/l

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

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

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ageing : Drink now and over the next 8 years.br /

in the vineyard : The 2010 vintage
What an intense year! It was extremely difficult to make predictions due to constant fluctuations in weather conditions with unrelenting winds prevailing almost throughout. Initially, matters were quite advanced with early bud burst but then cold weather during October and November created some delay. Subsequently though, favourable conditions were experienced and a smaller crop size resulted in the harvest moving forward. Production costs were high from the onset and with the decline in yield, expenses per ton skyrocketed. The 2009 growing season provided cool, overcast and rainy weather. These conditions during the induction period (October and November) had an adverse effect on bunch initiation for the 2010 harvest and impacted on this year's crop. Although sufficient cold, winter weather prevailed, the cool, wet spring caused uneven budding. The season was definitely characterised by strong winds between October and March. The summer months were also exceptionally hot and dry. Sunburn, wind and heat damage combined with downy mildew resulted in crop losses of up to 40% on certain blocks. February and March experienced the usual sporadic heat waves and the one recorded at the beginning of March 2010, which lasted longer than a week, will certainly go down in the annals. The overall cool climate during the initial part of ripening was beneficial for flavour retention. Due to the smaller crop, most blocks could be picked at optimal ripeness and the lower volumes also meant that cellar space was not a problem thus allowing the opportunity of prolonged skin contact. We were generally more than satisfied with the quality of the grapes that were harvested during 2010. Grapes were healthy with good flavours and analyses. Bunches were generally looser than normal and berries smaller with an excellent fruit to skin ratio, this resulting in intense colours in the red wines.

About the vineyard
The Proprietor's Blend is a blend of all the six varieties cultivated on the property. These vineyards grow on the warm north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. All six varieties thrive under these conditions and 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 2010 - 26.1°Brix average sugar at harvest

in the cellar : Grape bunches were gently destalked with a Bucher de-stalker and lightly crushed. On the sorting table, all excess stalks and rotten berries were removed carefully by hand. 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 maturated separately (micro-vinified) in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

Cooperage: Aged for 18 months - 70% in 300 litre French oak barrels & 30% in 300 litre American oak barrels.
Production: 3,575 x 6 x 750ml cases