

## Ernie Els Cabernet Sauvignon 2011

The 2011 is a brooding yet fine vintage. Pure-fruited cassis on the nose open to a fine balance of dark chocolate, wet earth, delicate spice and dried herbs. The palate has a dark inky intensity punched by a core of mineral finesse and all wrapped by a broad-shouldered finish. The tannins are burly and taugth, but will easily integrate with time as this decadent Cabernet Sauvignon will age well for a decade. Serious yet sumptuous.

**variety :** Cabernet Sauvignon | 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

**winery :** Ernie Els Wines

**winemaker :** Louis Strydom

**wine of origin :** Stellenbosch

**analysis :** alc : 14.8 % vol rs : 2.4 g/l pH : 3.66 ta : 5.9 g/l

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

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

Veritas Wine Awards 2013 - Silver

Veritas Wine Awards 2012 - Bronze Medal

### **in the vineyard :** The 2010 Vintage

The build-up to the harvest was fairly normal - a cold and wet winter, followed by a spring which saw nice, even budding of the grape varieties in the vineyard. November was fairly wet and December was the windiest month recorded in Stellenbosch since 1968. This resulted in dry conditions in the vineyards, which persisted throughout January and February. This was however helpful as it resulted in smaller berries which in-turn improved the intensity of the wines. These dry conditions and the heat wave experienced in early March hastened the harvesting of grapes by several weeks in order to limit the alcohol levels that would result from the fermented grapes. Supplementary irrigation on the properties maintained conditions for the later ripening varietals. Grapes harvested at the beginning of the season showed good analysis, especially on the pH front. During the latter half of the harvest season high temperatures caused sugars to shoot up while pH remained low. Further analysis also revealed low acids. Cellar space was under constant pressure as the heat ripened many varietals simultaneously. It was a good year in terms of yield and quality, especially on the early and mid-season cultivars.

### **About the Vineyard**

These vineyards grow on the warm north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. The soils give our wines exceptional depth and fruit purity. Five clones of Cabernet Sauvignon were utilized in the production of this wine with CS46C being our most abundant in clonal selection. The cooling influence of the Atlantic Ocean just 15 kilometres away extends the ripening period by up to 3 weeks resulting in lovely phenolic ripeness.

**about the harvest:** The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning.

Harvest: February & March, 2011. 25.2°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 17 months - 300 litre French oak barrels (20% new)

Production: 6,140 x 6 x 750ml cases

