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Ernie Els Proprietor's Syrah 2011

A terrific vintage for Syrah where the warmer conditions assisted in an incredibly powerful, yet finely tuned wine. Inky purple with a black core, the nose opens to smoked beef, dense blueberry, a touch of cassis and hints of scorched earth. The palate is plush and inviting with ingrained dark chocolate, gamey spice and even a hint of black truffle. The polished tannins are slightly more open than the 2010, as they appear to be coated with eternal layers of sweet fruit. The finish is long and clear with a freshness and savoury edge balancing the purity of fruit. Utterly balanced for immediate enjoyment, it will age well for up to a decade.



variety : Shiraz | 95% Shiraz, 5% Viognier
winery : Ernie Els Wines
winemaker : Louis Strydom
wine of origin :
analysis : **alc :** 14.57 % vol **rs :** 2.6 g/l **pH :** 3.72 **ta :** 5.6 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Full **wooded**
pack : Bottle **size :** 0 **closure :** Cork

Veritas Wine Awards 2013 - Silver
Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show 2013 - Silver
Decanter World Wine Awards 2013 - Commended

ageing : Taught and alluring at the moment, time will bring even more complexity and pleasure.br /

in the vineyard : Our Syrah vineyards grow on the warm north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. The Hutton Clovelly soils contain a high gravel content and offer rich middle palate weight. The Viognier was sourced from neighbouring Stellenbosch vineyards and was co-fermented during harvest.

The 2011 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 harvest: The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning. February / March 2011 - 25.2°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 17 months - 70% in 300 litre French oak barrels & 30% in 300 litre American oak barrels.
Production: 1113 x 6 x 750ml cases

Release date: December 1, 2012