

Laibach Merlot 2010

Beautiful dark red colour. Aromas of wild berries, dark chocolate and hints of mint are evident. On the palate great fruit expression as well with silky, almost velvety tannins. Wood not really evident in this medium bodied wine.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot

winery : Ladybird Vineyards

winemaker : Francois van Zyl

wine of origin : Simonsberg-Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 13.5 % vol rs : 2.6 g/l pH : 3.63 ta : 5.5 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **closure :** Cork

ageing : Good complexity and structure, to be enjoyed 2 - 5 years after the vintage.

in the vineyard : We have always believed that Merlot is a special grape on our farm. We consistently get good ripeness levels with moderate alcohol. The winemaking at Laibach is geared around the making of Merlot. We have a very good terroir for this grape with fantastic clay rich soils which is very important. Together with farming organically and using no irrigation we get good fleshy, almost silky tannins.

The grapes for this wine are grown in 2 different blocks.

about the harvest: We pick everything by hand, usually starting around the last week of February. Looking at the amount of leaves, we might pick the same block up to 3 times.

in the cellar : It is treated exactly the same as our Reserve Claypot Merlot, but get less new oak. Destemming is followed by a strict hand sorting to remove all green unwanted stems before crushing. We use 8 people and do around 1.5 - 2 tons per hour. This is critical in a country which the stems never really ripen. Batches can be cooled down to 10 degrees for a deliberate cold soak before fermentation. Some parts will go straight into small open top fermentation tanks for a traditional warm fermentation. Extraction is manually with punch downs preferred. Skin contact can be from 8 - 40 days depending on ripeness level of the vintage. Malolactic fermentation is done in some stainless, but in exceptional batches we can use 100% new French oak barrels. We import our own Merlot barrels from a small dedicated cooper in Pomerol. This wine spent 12 - 14 months in oak.

