

Ernie Els Signature 2010

The 2010 Ernie Els Signature is similar to the empathic and precise 2009 although packs even more power and performance. Cabernet Sauvignon based, all five Bordeaux varieties contribute to its superior complexity, class and character. The black core with purple rim shows its huge concentration, with time needed in the glass to coerce its depth of flavours. Ripe mulberry, strawberries laced with balsamic, graphite and a hint of chocolate all follow through to the luxuriously textured palate.

The rich fruit is balanced by a refined acidity and savoury, roasted-coriander-scented, meaty-edge.

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

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 14.99 % vol rs : 3.6 g/l pH : 3.48 ta : 5.9 g/l

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

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

Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show 2013 - Silver

ageing : Enjoy this towering wine over the next decade or more.

in the vineyard :

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.

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, 2010. 26.1° 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: 2 325 x 6 x 750ml cases