

Ernie Els Proprietor's Cabernet Sauvignon 2011

- Limited Release -

This classy 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon comes across with striking purity. It is once again richly concentrated and yet remarkably elegant and refined. Purple hued and powerfully built, its components are seamlessly knitted into a cassis-fruited, superbly layered palate. Hints of black cherries, dark chocolate, graphite and apricots are all balanced by its subtle oak support. The immense purity of fruit fits like a jigsaw into the perfectly chiseled, tannic frame. Finally finishing with inviting freshness and lacy tannins, this wonderful wine will evolve for a decade or more.

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 14.84 % vol rs : 3.4 g/l pH : 3.78 ta : 6.0 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry **wooded**

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

2014 Platter Guide - 5 Star rating 2013

Veritas Awards - Double Gold Medal

in the vineyard : 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 varieties. 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 varieties simultaneously. It was a good year in terms of yield and quality, especially on the early and mid-season cultivars.

About the vineyard

Our Cabernet Sauvignon 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 offering rich middle palate weight and delivering 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. 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 resulting in lovely phenolic ripeness.

about the harvest: February & March, 2011. 25.2° Brix average sugar at harvest. The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning.

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 clone is matured separately (micro-vinified) in French oak barrels before



blending and eventual bottling.

Cooperage: Aged for 18 months - 300 litre French oak barrels (80% new)

Production: 552 x 6 x 750ml cases