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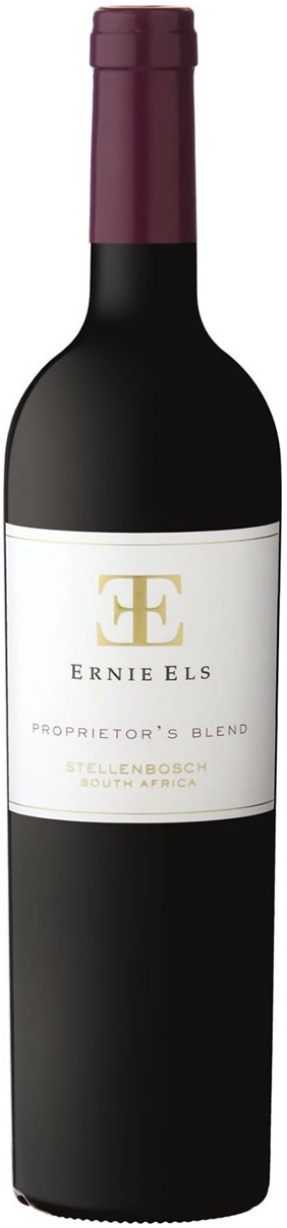
Ernie Els Proprietor's Blend 2012

2012 was a brilliant Stellenbosch vintage and the Proprietor's Blend takes advantage of the full ripeness, freshness and hauntingly rich tannins offered by the conditions. The nose abounds with dark-blue fruits, a hint of bacon, espresso and fig jam. Classy oak notes and a touch of truffle further tussle with the amazing fruit purity. The palate shows beguiling inky-black cassis from the Cabernet Sauvignon, providing fleshy tannins, a rock-solid core palate and towering structure. The large Shiraz component adds a spicy complexity and exotic edge, whilst the sprinkle of remaining Bordeaux varieties give finesse and depth. Roast beef and sugar-coated blueberries line the intense yet fleshy finish. This 2012 is the most backward vintage of this wine yet, it needs a few years to fully knit and it will age well for a decade of more.



variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 60%Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Shiraz, 5% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot
winery : Ernie Els Wines
winemaker : Louis Strydom
wine of origin : Stellenbosch
analysis : **alc :** 14.66 % vol **rs :** 3.5 g/l **pH :** 3.53 **ta :** 6.1 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Full **wooded**
pack : Bottle **size :** 750ml **closure :** Cork

014 International Wine and Spirit Competition - Silver

ageing : This 2012 is the most backward vintage of this wine yet, it needs a few years to fully knit and it will age well for a decade of more.

in the vineyard :
The 2012 Vintage
The 2012 harvest is emerging as a particularly good one, both in terms of quality and volume. Although it's still early days, we do foresee that this vintage has the potential to be of a very high standard. After fairly stable climatic conditions throughout the second semester of 2011, a cold and wet spring slowed down activity in the vineyards. We experienced warm weather in late December which led to some vigorous foliage growth. The bunch counts revealed an above average figure so "green harvesting" was needed in January. (Green harvesting is the removal of immature grape bunches for the purpose of decreasing yield and thus maintaining intensity on the remaining fruit.) It's particularly pleasing to report that there was no apparent disease in the vineyards. Moderate to warm temperatures from the second half of February were prevalent as expected, but cool conditions throughout March slowed the ripening of the vines and assisted in improving phenolic ripeness of the grapes. There were some early rains during April but luckily 95% of the crop had already been harvested by this stage. In general, there is much excitement about the 2012 vintage, a specific characteristic being optimal ripeness levels achieved at lower sugars, thus in-turn resulting in lower alcohol levels.

About the Vineyard
The Proprietor's Blend is a blend of all the six varieties cultivated on the property. These vineyards grow on the warm north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. All six varieties thrive under these conditions and 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. On the sorting table, all excess stalks and inferior berries were carefully removed.
Dates: March & April, 2012. 25.5° Brix average sugar at harvest

in the cellar :

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 maturated separately (micro-vinified) in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

Cooperage: Aged for 18 months – 70% in 300 litre French Oak barrels & 30% in 300 litre American Oak Barrels (50% new)
Production: 3,488 x 6 x 750ml cases
Sustainability Initiative: I.P.W. (Integrated Production of Wine) Certified