

Ernie Els Big Easy [RED] 2013

As the name suggests the Big Easy is bold in flavour and yet easy in demeanor. Pure, ripe, purple and red fruits immediately leap out the glass in an array of complexity, amplified by hints of rose-petals and boiled sweets. Warm notes of milk chocolate and roasted coffee round off wonderful complexity and depth. The Syrah dominated palate is juicy and succulent with the Cabernet Sauvignon backbone providing an inky structure. A dash of Rhône varieties give a dried, provincial-herb edge to the exquisitely balanced finish.

variety : Shiraz | 61% Shiraz, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Grenache, 4% Cinsaut, 4% Mourvèdre, 4% Viognier

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Western Cape

analysis : alc : 14.56 % vol rs : 3.1 g/l pH : 3.66 ta : 5.7 g/l

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

pack : Bottle **size** : 750ml **closure** : Cork

ageing : Somewhat boisterous and immensely enjoyable, drink the Big Easy over the next 5 years.

in the vineyard : The 2013 vintage

The 2013 harvest season started a week later than usual. Prolonged winter conditions continued in some areas up until September, followed by a cool spring which delayed bud burst by 7 to 14 days. The cold, wet weather conditions ensured even bud burst as well as the accumulation of water supplies that would allow the vineyards to cope with the warmer conditions later in the season. The vineyards had good growth in ideal dry weather conditions during the flowering and berry-set periods – although this also occurred later than usual. Early cultivars ripened later but an extremely dry and warm December resulted in the late cultivars ripening as normal. Ideal weather conditions during the harvest season prevailed with moderate day-time temperatures, cool evenings and no prolonged spells of rain or heat waves; this all impacted positively on grape quality and established good colour and flavour. It was also a particularly healthy year and diseases, pests and rot only occurred later in the season, while the warm and dry weather conditions together with effective disease and pest control resulted in minimal losses.

About the vineyard

The Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Mourvèdre and Viognier were sourced from the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. Cinsaut was obtained from various sites in Stellenbosch as well. Grenache was purchased from both Wellington and Stellenbosch vineyards.

about the harvest: The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning.

Dates: March & April, 2013. 22.5° Brix average sugar at harvest.

in the cellar : On the sorting table, all excess stalks and inferior berries were carefully removed. 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 14 months – 80% in 300 litre French Oak barrels & 20% in 300 litre American Oak barrels



Production: 30,000 x 6 x 750ml cases
Sustainability Initiative: I.P.W. (Integrated Production of Wine) Certified