

Ernie Els Proprietor's Cabernet Sauvignon 2012

The 2012 Proprietor's Cabernet Sauvignon is a perfect reflection of the phenomenal 2012 Stellenbosch vintage, a marriage of ripeness and elegance. The nose immediately dazzles with opulent cassis and red plums, while hints of mushroom, ripe fig and liquorice add complexity. The palate is braced by solid oak, which not only offers fragrant spice, but adds to a majestic deep and finely tannic structure. The dense fruit is lifted by a fresh cranberry edge which runs through to a luxuriously long and silky finish. A spectacular, brooding vintage that will benefit from long aging.

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 14.94 % vol rs : 2.7 g/l pH : 3.47 ta : 5.8 g/l

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

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

2015 - Top 100 SA Wines - Winner

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

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: March & April, 2012. 25.5° 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 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 18 months - 300 litre French oak barrels (80% new)
Production: 552 x 6 x 750ml cases