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Plaisir de Merle Shiraz 2010



Colour: Dark red.
Bouquet: Aromatic white pepper, mulberry, vanilla and spicy notes.
Taste: Full-bodied, ripe plum and cherries, some savoury flavours complimented by spicy oak. The ripe red fruit and tannins provide sweet rich layers on the pallet.

This wine is an ideal partner to a juicy steak or Osso Bucco.

variety : Shiraz | 100% Shiraz
winery : Plaisir Wine Estate
winemaker : Niel Bester
wine of origin : Paarl
analysis : **alc :** 14.2 % vol **rs :** 2.1 g/l **pH :** 3.61 **ta :** 5.9 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Full **taste :** Fragrant **wooded**
pack : Bottle **size :** 750ml **closure :** Cork

ageing : The wine is ready to drink now, but it will gain in complexity and character with further cellaring for 3 - 7 years.

Background
Established by the French Huguenots in 1693 on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountains between Paarl and Franschhoek, Plaisir de Merle is a rare gem.

A Distell showpiece, this 974 hectare estate in Simondium, Paarl, has earned international acclaim for its white and red wines. About 400 hectares are planted with a variety of noble grape cultivars such as Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Shiraz and Malbec. An area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar. Winemaker Niel Bester, who has gained fame in producing classically styled yet accessible wines, attributes the success of his wines to being able to work with great fruit coming from a very unique terrain and the invaluable input from his viticulture team.

in the vineyard : The vineyards
The diversity of the soils, slopes and elevations all add to the quality of Plaisir de Merle fruit. Well-drained weathered granite soils (predominantly Tukulu and Hutton) with good water retention allow minimal interference in irrigation with most vineyards being dry land. There are two vineyards that contribute to this wine: the first was planted in 1993 and is situated between 250 m and 300m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg; the second is five years younger and situated on the lower slopes of the Simonsberg at about 150 m above sea level.
Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

about the harvest: Grapes were hand-picked at 24.2 to 24.7 Balling.

in the cellar : The older vineyard produces wine with loads of spice and white pepper and the younger contributes berry fruit and concentrated plum flavours. After destemming and crushing, it was fermented on the skins for 8 - 11 days. Juice was pumped over the skins every 6 hours to extract flavour, tannins and colour. The wine was left in contact with the skins for about 5 days after fermentation. The wine was transferred to barrels to complete malo-lactic fermentation, then racked and returned to French and American oak barrels for a period of 14 -16 months. The wine was then blended, filtered and bottled.