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Plaisir de Merle MCC 2012

Colour: Light straw with a fine beady mousse.
Bouquet: Delicate yeasty tones, layered with toast and ripe fruit enlivened by a firm mousse and a persistent bead making it particularly attractive
Taste: A foamy mouth feel and yeasty notes with crisp green apple freshness imparted by the Chardonnay and the Pinot Noir providing the flavours of red fruit. It has a long lingering mature finish.

Enjoy with exotic seafoods such as oysters, scallops and seafood platters. Stars well on its own when served chilled and will add pleasure and enjoyment to any occasion.

variety : Pinot Noir | 70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir
winery : Plaisir Wine Estate
winemaker : Niel Bester
wine of origin : Western Cape
analysis : **alc :** 11.29 % vol **rs :** 7.0 g/l **pH :** 3.24 **ta :** 5.3 g/l
type : Sparkling **style :** Off Dry
pack : Bottle **size :** 750ml **closure :** Cork

ageing : This timeless Cap Classique with great elegance and complexity is ready to drink now and will develop well in the bottle for five to seven 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 Malbec and, more recently, Pinot Noir. An area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar. Winemaker Niel Bester who in 2012 celebrates 20 years as cellarmaster at Plaisir de Merle, has gained fame in producing classically styled yet accessible wines. He 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 diversity of the soils, slopes and elevations is closely linked with the quality of Plaisir de Merle wines. Well-drained weathered granite soils (predominantly Tukulu and Hutton) with good water retention allow for minimal irrigation and most vineyards dry land.

This is the third vintage of Plaisir de Merle MCC. The Chardonnay grapes were selected by Niel Bester from a single 15-year-old vineyard at Plaisir de Merle situated 325m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg. Because the Pinot Noir vines on the farm are still too young, these grapes were sourced from two different 12-year-old trellised vineyards in Stellenbosch, one on the north-eastern slopes of the Helderberg and the other on the southern slopes of the Stellenbosch Mountains.
Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux.

in the cellar : This special release of Plaisir de Merle MCC - an elegant and distinctive Méthode Cap Classique is made in the classic French tradition from two noble varieties, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. It is a blend of 30% Pinot Noir which imparts its distinctive body, flavour and maturity, and 70% Chardonnay for its clean flintiness. The grapes were hand-picked and selected for their overall quality and suitability. The Chardonnay grapes were harvested by hand at 18.4° Balling in January 2012, while the Pinot Noir grapes were harvested at 20.2° Balling in late January and early February. After whole bunch pressing with minimal skin contact, the clear grape juice

was left to settle before it was pumped into steel tanks for cold fermentation. After the first fermentation and malolactic fermentation were completed, the wine was prepared for secondary fermentation in the bottle.

The wine was left on the lees for approximately two years before the sediment was removed in the traditional process of “remuage” and “dégorgement”.

The bottles were then corked and laid down in a cool cellar for another 2 – 4 months.