

Ernie Els Big Easy Red Blend 2015

The sublime and lively 2015 vintage shines through in perhaps the best Big Easy yet. A melange of ripe Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon is layered with waves of Grenache, Cinsaut, Mourvèdre and a touch of Viognier. Quite perfumed and fittingly complex, the palate is lined with chocolate, spice and confectionary cherries. A peppery nuance adds further character, all framed by a fine structure and juicy core. Ready to drink, its long chalky finish will assist its 5 years ageing potential.

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

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Western Cape

analysis : alc : 14.68 % vol rs : 3.3 g/l pH : 3.68 ta : 5.9 g/l

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

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

2016 Sommerliers Selection Award Winner - 4B Reds (Elegant/Classy).

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

in the vineyard :

The 2015 Vintage

The vintage will be remembered as one of the driest and earliest in years, with a somewhat smaller wine grape harvest promising exceptional wines. Good reserves were accumulated during the post-harvest period in April and May, after which leaf fall generally occurred at the right time. A cold, wet winter led to the accumulation of sufficient cold units for the full breaking of dormancy, which contributed to even bud break. Warm weather in August resulted in earlier bud break, after which a warm, dry and windy summer kept vineyard growth under control and accelerated ripening by approximately two weeks. The dry weather also led to one of the healthiest seasons in years, with almost no losses due to diseases or rot. With the absence of the usual heat waves in most regions, cooler than usual weather in February was ideal for ripening and harvesting. Smaller berries, as well as moderate temperatures during the harvest time led to good colour and intense flavour in this year's red wines. Although somewhat smaller, this was one of the best, if not the best, harvests in years.

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 2015. 25.5° Brix average sugar at harvest

in the cellar :

TO 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 and 20% in 300 litre American Oak barrels.

Production: 22,000 x 6 x 750ml cases