

Plaisir de Merle Malbec 2011

Colour: Vibrant red.

Bouquet: Red berry fruit, with hints of sweet oak.

Taste: Cherries, red fruit on the palate with a creamy oak finish and soft tannins.

This versatile wine will pair well with spicy Mexican, Cajun, Indian or Italian fare (especially with tomato-based sauces). Enjoyable too with semi-hard cheeses, barbecue foods, chilli and sausage.

variety : Malbec | 100% Malbec

winery : Plaisir Wine Estate

winemaker : Niel Bester

wine of origin : Paarl

analysis : alc : 14.6 % vol rs : 2.4 g/l pH : 3.68 ta : 5.4 g/l

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

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

ageing : Although very drinkable, this wine will benefit from further ageing for another three to five years

in the vineyard : Background

Established by the French Huguenots in 1693 on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountains between Paarl and Franschoek, 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. Cellarmaster Niel Bester 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.

The vineyards

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 therefore no supplementary irrigation is required.

Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

about the harvest: The grapes were harvested from a single, 13 year old vineyard situated about 270 m above sea at 24.5° Balling.

in the cellar : The grapes were destalked and crushed into a small stainless steel fermenter. The juice was pumped over the skins at regular intervals to extract colour, flavour and tannins. Malolactic fermentation took place in 300-litre new and second-fill French oak barrels. After racking the wine off the lees it was returned to the barrels for a total period of 16 months.

