

Ernie Els Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon 2016

There is more to the Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon than meets the eye. Alluring cassis fruit and deep fragrance is matched with wonderful drinkability and deft balance. Medium bodied and sleek, notes of red cherry, salted liquorice and grilled beef slowly unfold from the glass. The addition of 15% Cinsaut adds a lightness and a delicate perfume to a softly textured, sweet-fruited palate. It is moderate in alcohol with a lovely freshness, an infusion of mixed berries line a juicy finish.

This wine begs for a rare cut of Sirloin

variety : Cabernet Sauvignon | 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Cinsaut

winery : Ernie Els Wines

winemaker : Louis Strydom

wine of origin : Western Cape

analysis : alc : 13.63 % vol rs : 3.3 g/l pH : 3.71 ta : 5.7 g/l

type : Red **body :** Medium **wooded**

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

ageing : Drink with ease over the next 5 years.

Louis Strydom has gone back to the traditional style made on the foothills of the Helderberg mountain, where Cabernet Sauvignon and Cinsaut were planted together from around the 1920's, and the two varieties were later blended together to make a wine that is softer and rounder in style for early enjoyment. By the mid 1970's this style was so popular, that Cinsaut was one of the most widely planted varieties in Stellenbosch. Over the years Cinsaut has all but disappeared in Stellenbosch, but now almost 50 years later, we have replanted Cinsaut on Ernie Els Wines to revive the traditional 'Helderberg red blend' style. This Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon has up to 15% Cinsaut blended in to be true to the history of the Helderberg red blend, as well as provide an extension of our vision to be the best Cabernet Sauvignon producer in South Africa. Most importantly, for the consumer and wine lover, this wine will provide a delicious and accessible Cabernet Sauvignon.

in the vineyard : The 2016 Vintage

Challenging conditions led to a reduced wine grape crop for South African producers in 2016, but grapes were healthy and concentrated flavours promise good wines. The weather was very warm, especially from the end of October towards the end of January, which restricted the growth and constituted lower bunch masses and smaller berries. However, the dry conditions led to the vineyards and grapes being very healthy overall. Smaller berries led to more concentrated colour and flavour on the positive side and good wines are expected from the 2016 harvest. Good reserves were accumulated during the post-harvest period (April and May), after which leaf fall occurred mostly at the right time. The winter started off late in most of the regions but the weather conditions were cold enough to break dormancy. Spring came on time and the weather conditions were ideal which led to good, even bud burst. The harvest period started a week early due to the warmer weather and it ended about two weeks earlier. The wines from the 2016 vintage appear astoundingly good, with great structure and good flavours.

About the vineyard

Cabernet Sauvignon was sourced from the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. Selected pockets of Cabernet Sauvignon were sourced from different coastal regions to compliment the style. The Cinsaut was sourced from 22 year old bush vines.

about the harvest: The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning. On the



sorting table, all excess stalks and inferior berries were carefully removed.
Harvest Dates: March 2016. 25° Brix average sugar at harvest

in the cellar : 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 3 times per day ensuring maximum colour extraction from the skins. After primary fermentation the maceration period was 10 days before pressing. The wine is matured in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

Production 14 800 x 6 x 750ml cases
Cooperage Second and third fill French oak barrels