



PLAISIR DE MERLE

EST. 1693



Chemical analysis

pH – 3.67
TA – 5.89 g/l
Alc – 15.1 vol/%
RS – 2.73 g/l



SIGNATURE BLEND LIMITED EDITION

Winemaker: Niel Bester
Appellation: Paarl
Grape Varietal: 33% Cabernet Sauvignon; 25% Petit Verdot; 17% Cabernet franc; 17% Malbec; 8% Merlot

History

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, and an area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar.

The vineyards

The diversity of the soils, slopes and elevations are closely linked with the quality of Plaisir de Merle wines. Grapes were sourced from dryland vineyards planted on well-drained weathered granite soils (predominantly Tukulu and Hutton) with good water retention. They range in age from 14 to 21 years and are situated between 250m and 350m above sea-level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg.

Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

The Winemaking:

The grapes were harvested from late-February to mid-March between 24.3° and 25.8° Balling and fermented separately in small stainless steel tanks at 24°C for 9 – 11 days. The juice was pumped over the skins twice a day for about 2 hours to extract colour, flavour and tannins. After fermentation the wines were left on the skins for a further 3 to 5 days, racked and malo-lactic fermentation was completed in 300-litre French oak barrels. The wines were racked and transferred to new barrels for a period of 16 months where after individual barrels were selected for the blend. No filtration was required prior to bottling.

Winemaker's comments:

The wine reflects the diversity of the farm with its different soil types, micro-climate and fynbos integrated between the vineyards. This particular wine encapsulates Niel Bester's tenure of two decades as winemaker at Plaisir de Merle. It represents his passion, dedication, and the intimate knowledge attained over many years of the terroir and its unpredictability from one vintage to the next.

Tasting Notes:

Colour: Inky dark in colour
Nose: Displays layers of spice, cassis, dark berry and black fruit and hints of Espresso.
Taste: Rich dark chocolate, blackcurrant and a variety of red berries. Tannins firm and oak well integrated with the fruit. Full-bodied with oak adding hints of tobacco and cedar
Ageing potential: The tannins will provide structure for a long ageing period in the bottle of between 10 to 15 years.

Food pairing: Serve with grilled meats or pot-roasts

Available at Plaisir de Merle Brandhome, online at www.vinoteque.co.za/collections/plaisir-de-merle and at selected fine wine stores.

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