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Plaisir de Merle Merlot 2012

On the taste it is well structured with a pleasant soft and velvety palate, layers of ripe sweet red berries and prunes and supported by cedar and vanilla oak flavours. It has a rich lingering aftertaste

Made to complement most food dishes, this Merlot pairs well with venison, pot roasts and other lightly spiced meat dishes.

variety : Merlot | 100% Merlot
winery : Plaisir Wine Estate
winemaker : Niel Bester
wine of origin : Paarl
analysis : **alc :** 14.17 % vol **rs :** 2.5 g/l **pH :** 3.58 **ta :** 5.8 g/l
type : Red **style :** Dry **body :** Full **wooded**
pack : Bottle **size :** 0 **closure :** Cork

ageing : Accessible now, this wine has good maturation potential of five to ten years.

in the vineyard :
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 and Malbec. 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, and 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 all add to the quality of Plaisir de Merle's grapes. Well-drained weathered granite soils (predominantly Tukulu and Hutton) with good water retention allow minimal interference in irrigation with most vineyards being dry land. The grapes were selected and handpicked from two vineyards. Starting on February 13 and ending on February 20. They are situated between 140m and 370m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg.

Viticulturist: Freddie le Roux

about the harvest: The grapes were harvested at 24.7 and 25.6° Balling.

in the cellar :
Fermented in stainless steel tanks at 24 °C for around 8 days. The juice was pumped over the skins daily until fermented dry. Upon completion of fermentation the wine was left on the skins for 4 -12 days. The wine was racked off and malolactic fermentation was completed in the tanks and barrels. The wine was matured in 40% new, 40% second-fill and 20% third-fill French oak barrels for periods ranging from 12 to 16 months. Finally all the individual barrels were tasted and evaluated to select the final blend.

Total production: 3500 Cases