



PLAISIR DE MERLE

EST. 1693

PETIT PLAISIR 2017

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

Residual sugar: 4.0 g/l
Alcohol: 14.45% by volume
Total acidity: 5.8 g/l
pH: 3.61



Winemaker: Niel Bester

Appellation: Paarl

Grape Varietal: 52% Shiraz, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Cabernet Franc

BACKGROUND

Established by the French Huguenots in 1693 on the slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain 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. Winemaker 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 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 from various vineyards situated between 250m and 370m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg.

VITICULTURIST: Paul Laas

THE WINEMAKING

The grapes were handpicked, crushed and fermented on the skins in stainless steel tanks at 24°C to 26 °C. The juice was pumped over the skins to extract colour and flavour. At the end of fermentation, the wine was racked off the skins and malolactic fermentation was completed in the tanks and barrels. After a second racking the wine was matured in French and American oak barrels for periods ranging from 12 to 16 months. The individual wines were tasted and evaluated and the blend was finalised. The wine was bottled with as little as possible interference.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

COLOUR: Dark purple

BOUQUET: Violets, ripe red berries, sweet spice and a touch of white pepper

TASTE: Blueberries, plums, sweet spice and savoury notes. A soft and sweet lingering finish with hints of oak and vanilla

AGEING POTENTIAL: This wine is accessible now and has excellent maturation potential for five or more years

FOOD PAIRING: Rich and flavourful meat and pasta dishes.