



## PLAISIR DE MERLE

### PLAISIR DE MERLE CABERNET FRANC 2004

#### Background

A Distell showpiece, this 1 000 hectare estate in Simondium, Paarl, has earned international acclaim for its white and red wines. Winemaker Niel Bester attributes the benefits of not only working with great fruit coming from a very unique terrain, but also getting the valuable input from Dr Paul Pontallier, MD at Chateau Margeaux. An historical farm established in 1687, producing wines that are classically styled and accessible, is the goal for all involved.

#### The vineyards (viticulturist: Hannes van Rensburg)

The diversity of the soils, slopes and elevations is closely linked with the quality of Plaisir de Merle wines. Well-drained weathered granite soils with good water retention allow minimal interference in irrigation with most vineyards dry land.

Situated on the east and north-east facing slopes of the Simonsberg Mountain, PDM is bordered by the towns of Stellenbosch, Franschoek and Paarl. The vineyards, averaging 18 years, are located between 175m and 350m above sea level where high mountain peaks shade the vineyards from the hot, late afternoon sun. This slows down ripening, resulting in wines with a very typically rich fruit complexity.

#### The winemaking (winemaker: Niel Bester)

The grapes were crushed at 25.5 degrees balling. The juice was pumped over the skins daily to extract colour, tannins and flavour. Upon completion of fermentation the wine was left on the skins for a further eight days. The wine was racked off, transferred to 225 liter new French oak barrels where malo-lactic fermentation was completed. After another racking the wine stayed in the barrels for a total period of 16 months. The wine was treated with an egg white fining before it was transferred from the barrels and prepared for bottling. No further stabilization was required before bottling.

#### Winemaker's comments

Colour	:	Brilliant red
Bouquet	:	Pronounced berry, cedar and vanilla oak aromas with plum and fruitcake
Taste	:	Soft and velvety with ripe and accesable tannins with plum and fruitcake followed by a longlasting aftertaste
Maturation potential	:	Ready to drink now but will gain in complexity with further cellaring for 5- 8 years .

#### Food pairing

Very versatile, this wine would best compliment all red meat dishes.

#### Chemical analysis

Alcohol	14,45 % by volume
Residual sugar	2,4g/l
Total acid	6,5g/l
pH	3.5