



## PLAISIR DE MERLE

### PLAISIR DE MERLE PETIT PLAISIR 2014

*Winemaker:* Niel Bester

*Appellation:* Paarl

*Grape Varietal:* 50% Shiraz, 29% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Malbec, 5% Petit verdot, 3% Roobernet

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#### **Background**

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. An area of only about 80 hectares of prime vineyards has been set aside for the Plaisir de Merle cellar. Winemaker Niel Bester, who has gained fame in producing classically styled yet accessible wines, attributes the success of his wines to being able to work with great fruit coming from a very unique terroir, as well as the valuable 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 various vineyards. They are situated between 250m and 370m above sea level on the south-eastern slopes of the Simonsberg.

#### **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 at this point and the blend was finalised. The wine was bottled with as little as possible interference.

#### **Winemaker's comments**

**Colour:** Dark berry

**Bouquet:** Concentrated cherry, plum, red berry and light, savoury aromas

**Taste:** The sweet spice and vanilla derived from the oak barrels blends seamlessly with the dark berry fruit flavours, ending in a long, lingering sweet and soft finish.

**Ageing process and potential:** This wine is accessible now and has good maturation potential for five or more years

**Food pairing:** Rich and flavourful meat and pasta dishes

#### **Chemical analysis:**

**Residual sugar:** 2.7 g/l

**Alcohol:** 13.84 % by volume

**Total acid:** 5.9 g/l

**pH:** 3.63

**Extract:** 30 g/l

