



- **Country:** South Africa
- **Region:** Coastal Region
- **Subregion:** Stellenbosch
- **Vintage:** 2017
- **Colour:** Red
- **Grape Variety:** Merlot
- **ABV:** 14.5%
- **Bottle Size:** 75cl
- **Closure:** Natural cork
- **Style:** Boisterous and enjoyable
- **Drink With:** A good leg or shoulder of lamb but hold the mint sauce

GERRARD SEEL: WINE MERCHANTS TO THE TRADE SINCE 1984

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ERNIE ELS MAJOR SERIES MERLOT 2017

<https://gerrardseel.co.uk/products/ernie-els-merlot>

The medium bodied Ernie Els Major Series Merlot shows the sparkle of the vintage with a fresh acidity and delicate red fruits. Laced with ripe plums, strawberry, shavings of milk chocolate and dark cherry, it is dazzlingly complex and yet shows its pedigree of exceptional drinkability and class. Soft, chewy tannins balance the silky, oak-aged structure, whilst the palate eventually ends with whiffs of fine tobacco and earthy spice. Tantalising and delicious in its youth, this Merlot will age well for 5 years or more.

The Ernie Els Merlot vineyards grow on the warm north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region, within the Stellenbosch appellation. The soils contain a high gravel content which offers rich, mid-palate weight giving this wine exceptional depth and fruit purity. With an altitude of approximately 250 metres above sea level, together with the cooling influence of the Atlantic Ocean just 15 kilometres away, this extends the ripening period by up to 3 weeks and results in lovely phenolic ripeness. A proportion of grapes from the Devon Valley region were also used. Aged for 14 months in 300 litre French Oak barrels, 20% of which were new.

ABOUT THE GROWER

Ernie Els Wines was established in 1999, and from the outset the intention was to produce world class wines that mirrored the quality of some of the world's greatest bottles he had been fortunate enough to enjoy whilst playing. On his travels around the world, Ernie has been a great ambassador for South Africa and it was his desire that his wines do the same. The focus, discipline and commitment that Ernie displayed during his golf career were all brought to bear on his new project. Ernie chose Stellenbosch, right at the heart of South African winemaking, to create his winery and vineyards and for those of you lucky enough to visit the estate on the slopes of the Helderberg Mountain you'll find it manicured to perfection, both inside and out.

Louis Strydom is the man who crafts the wines at Ernie Els Wines and, ever since the first vintage in 2000, he has been regarded as one of the finest winemakers in the Cape. Ernie's love of Bordeaux is reflected in the choice of grape varieties planted and the wines produced at his estate, but they are all stamped with the unique hallmark of South Africa.