



Ernie Els 2014 Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon



RELEASE DATE	1 st February 2016
VARIETAL COMPOSITION	Cabernet Sauvignon 85% • Cinsaut 15%
APPELLATION	Western Cape
VINEYARDS	Stellenbosch and Coastal vineyard sites
HARVEST	March 2014. 25° Brix average sugar at harvest
COOPERAGE	Second and third fill French oak barrels
TECHNICAL DATA	Alc. 14.30 % By Vol. • R.S. 3.9 g/l • T.A. 6.0 g/l • pH 3.69
PRODUCTION	5000 x 6 x 750ml cases
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE	I.P.W. (Integrated Production of Wine) Certified

Louis Strydom has gone back to the traditional style made on the foothills of the Helderberg mountain, where Cabernet Sauvignon and Cinsaut were planted together from around the 1920's, and the two varieties were later blended together to make a wine that is softer and rounder in style for early enjoyment. By the mid 1970's this style was so popular, that Cinsaut was one of the most widely planted varieties in Stellenbosch. Over the years Cinsaut has all but disappeared in Stellenbosch, but now almost 50 years later, we have replanted Cinsaut on Ernie Els Wines to revive the traditional 'Helderberg red blend' style. This Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon has up to 15% Cinsaut blended in to be true to the history of the Helderberg red blend, as well as provide an extension of our vision to be the best Cabernet Sauvignon producer in South Africa. Most importantly, for the consumer and wine lover, this wine will provide a delicious and accessible Cabernet Sauvignon

TASTING NOTES

The 2014 Big Easy Cabernet Sauvignon shows immediate nuances of red fruits, Chinese spice and a hint of damp earth. The palate is medium-bodied, loaded with succulent raspberries and cherries, sprinkled with dried goji berries on the finish. Crunchy tannins balance the primary fruit, deftly supported by soft, creamy oak and finished off by a pinch of mixed ground pepper. It's easy-going, delicious and yet refined, reflecting the style of the 2014 Stellenbosch vintage. Drink now and over the next 3-5 years.

THE 2014 VINTAGE

Initial vineyard growth was slow due to late cold fronts experienced during August 2013 followed by cool, wet weather at the start of the growing season leading to relatively high incidence of disease. Mid-November rainfall further hampered effective disease control by creating challenging spraying conditions and limiting access to the vineyards. As a result, downy mildew led to crop losses early on in the season in some of our red wine areas. Thereafter, favourable climatic conditions improved for flowering and good berry set ensued. The high rainfall in mid-November did however spark vigorous growth which required extra input to ensure superior grape quality and disease prevention through good canopy aeration and sunlight exposure. Widespread rainfall during early January increased pressure on viticulturists due to the threat of disease and even further rot. Ideal dry and moderate conditions reigned during ripening in January and mid-February after which a warm period accelerated ripening and resulted in great pressure on harvest intakes. The wine potential looks promising in terms of quality. Moderate weather conditions during the harvest season contributed to intense red wines.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD

Cabernet Sauvignon was sourced from the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. Selected pockets of Cabernet Sauvignon were sourced from different coastal regions to compliment the style. The Cinsaut was sourced from 22 year old bush vines.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were hand-picked in the cool of early morning. On the sorting table, all excess stalks and inferior berries were carefully removed. Grape bunches were gently destalked with a Bucher de-stalker and lightly crushed. Fermentation took place in 7-ton, open-top stainless steel tanks with yeast WE 372 being added to the juice. The wines were pumped-over and punched-down manually 3 times per day ensuring maximum colour extraction from the skins. After primary fermentation the maceration period was 10 days before pressing. The wine is matured in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

