SECKFORD AGENCIES

MAJOR SERIES MERLOT, ERNIE ELS

Vintage 2018

ERNIE ELS WINES



Named in recognition of Ernie Els' golfing achievements, Major Series also reflects the premium nature of the wines from this South African estate.

TASTING NOTE

Rich, plummy and luscious dark cherry is evident to start; balanced by notes of pipe tobacco, fresh tilled earth, and an elegant, herbaceous tone. The palate follows, full of rounded, rich, fruit flavours and chewy, dense tannins, with a chalky and dry end. It shows the density of the vintage, balancing approachable fruit with a serious tannin undercarriage and etched granitic focus to the long finish. Medium bodied with good complexity.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The 2018 harvest season will be remembered as the drought season. At Ernie Els Wines they are very blessed to have bountiful water on the Helderberg. but still need to be careful with water use during the summer months leading up to harvest. They are also working hard to adapt their viticultural techniques during the past three years to help the vineyards cope optimally with the heat and limited irrigation. The drought was further buffered by a surprisingly cooler season. Due to the somewhat buffered circumstances, the vines reacted gracefully to the drought with no abnormal growth patterns observed. Vine canopies were kept nice and thin for sunlight and, of course, fewer leaves means less water needed. Vineyards are resilient plants and their natural instinct in drier years is to produce smaller bunches with smaller berries. Small berries are usually the start of a great wine and 2018 was no different.

VINIFICATION DETAILS

The hand-picked bunches arrive at the winery in the morning. The bunches are sorted and destemmed, after which the berries are sorted again to ensure that only the ripe berries go to the tank. Whole berries are fermented in open top tanks as well as in barrels. Intermittent pump-overs and punch downs ensure a balance between flavour, colour and tannin extraction from the skins. All ferments are meticulously monitored during fermentation to ensure that all the natural aromas and flavours are preserved and highlighted as required. After primary fermentation some batches will be left on the skins for extended maceration as required. The batches are pressed and transferred to a combination of old and new oak for maturation. Each batch of Merlot is maturated separately (micro-vinified) in oak barrels before blending and eventual bottling.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Alcohol	Residual sugar
14.6	2.0
pH	**Acidity**
3.41	6.1

AWARDS

Tim Atkin MW: 90 pts

ATTRIBUTES

Origin	Variety	Malolactic Fermentation	Bottle Size	Vegetarian
South Africa	Merlot	Yes	75cl	Yes

Winemaker	Fining Agent	Closure	Region	Vegan
Louis Strydom	None	Cork	Stellenbosch	Yes