SECKFORD AGENCIES

MAJOR SERIES MERLOT, ERNIE ELS

Vintage 2017

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

All the hallmarks of a classic Merlot with ripe plums and earthy notes supported by a core of minerality and fleshed out with ripe strawberry, forest underfloor, hint of chocolate, and a deepening of dark black berry laced with a hint caramel and oak spice. The savoury palate is coated in sweet, attractive oak with distinct salty edge. Medium bodied, fresh yet serious with good line of acidity and clean to end. A blend of 94% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

The previous growing season had its challenges, which seemed to roll over into the 2016/2017 growing season with the continuation of the drought. Winter 2016 was quite dry with even less rain than the previous year, while spring quickly passed straight into warmer summer days. Bud burst was good due to sufficient soil moisture, but with the warmer spring/summer weather the soil started losing moisture quickly, resulting in naturally reduced shoot growth. The vineyard then focused its energy on developing and ripening the small bunches, with smaller berries leading to more concentrated colour and flavour. The dry conditions also meant that both the vineyards and grapes were very healthy. With moderate, but warm days during December and January the start of harvest returned to its normal date. The uninterrupted warmth during harvest also helped the bunches reach optimal ripeness while the berries steadily developed flavours over a slightly longer period of time.

VINIFICATION DETAILS

The hand-picked bunches arrived at the winery in the morning, and were then sorted and destemmed. Whole berries were fermented in open top tanks as well as in barrels with intermittent pump-overs and punch downs to ensure a balance between flavour, colour and tannin extraction from the skins. All ferments were meticulously monitored during fermentation to ensure that all the natural aromas and flavours were preserved and highlighted as required. After primary fermentation some batches were left on the skins for extended maceration as required. The batches were pressed and transferred to a combination of old and new oak for maturation separately (micro-vinified) before blending and eventual bottling.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Alcohol	Residual sugar
14.5	3.0
pH	**Acidity**
3.38	5.9

ATTRIBUTES

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

Winemaker	Fining Agent	Closure	Region	Vegan
Louis Strydom	Egg white	Cork	Stellenbosch	No