

# Ernie Els Proprietor's Blend 2018

CSPC# 721146

6x750ml

14.31% alc./vol.

**Chemical Analysis** Acidity 6.1 g/l pH: 3.59 Residual Sugar 3.3 g/l  
**Grape Variety** 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Shiraz, 5% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot

**Region** Stellenbosch, South Africa

**Sustainability** Accredited Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) estate. Vegan Certified.

**Vintage** The 2018 harvest season will be remembered as the drought season. At Ernie Els Wines we are very blessed to have bountiful water on the Helderberg. We were, however, still careful with our water use during the summer months leading up to harvest. We've also been working hard to adapt our viticultural techniques during the past 3 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, less 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.

**Winemaker** Louis Strydom

**Vineyards** The Proprietor's Blend is a blend of six varieties that are grown on the property. These vineyards grow on the warm, north-facing slopes of the Helderberg region within the Stellenbosch appellation. These particular varieties thrive under these conditions and result in rich, full-bodied red wines. With an altitude of approximately 250 metres above sea level, together with the cooling influence of the Atlantic Ocean, the ripening period can be extended, resulting in wines with phenolic ripeness.

**Harvest** The grapes are hand-harvesting in the cool of the early morning.

**Maturation** The grapes were hand-harvested in the cool of the early morning. Whole berries were fermented in open top tanks and barrels with intermittent pump-overs and punch-downs to ensure a balance between flavour, colour and tannin extraction from the skins. The Shiraz component was partially whole bunch fermented to aid with flavour complexity. All ferments were meticulously monitored to ensure that the natural aromas and flavours were preserved. After primary fermentation, some tanks underwent extended maceration. Each variety was matured separately in oak before final blending and bottling.

Aged for 18 months in 300 litre French Oak barrels (30% new)

**Cellaring** American and French oak is finely woven into the long finish, providing layers for further of aging potential over 10 years.

**Tasting Notes** Crimson with a plum core. Intense graphite, edged in dark chocolate and black pepper spice; these brooding aromatics unspool, coating black cherries, plums, and cassis. On the palate ribbons of juicy black and red cherries abound across a fine-boned structure, the tannins, crushed and soft, wrap around this density like silk. From this savoury, plums and redcurrants are drawn into the deep-fruited and peppery finish.

**Serve with** Great when served with a big steak.

**Scores/Awards** **4.5\* stars (91 points)** - Meryl Weaver, Platter's South African Wine Guide 2023  
**92 points** - Tim Atkin MW, Special South Africa Report 2020  
**Silver Medal / 92 points** - Decanter World Wine Awards 2023  
**Bronze Medal** - International Wine Challenge 2023  
**Top 10** - Winemag Prescient Signature Red Blend Report  
**Best Overall / 94 points** - Winemag Prescient Signature Red Blend Report  
**92 points** - Gilbert & Gaillard - January 2023

**Reviews** "Similar cab-led blend with shiraz (60/20) & 4 others in 2018. Riper & more sombre dark berry, earthy tones, all slightly muted by 35% new oak's dry, dusty tannins. Less fruit intensity & gravitas than previous."  
- MW, wineonaplatter.com



*“Very dark garnet. Matured nose with layers of leather and spice. Grippy on the dark fruit palate with pencil shavings and cassis. Reminds of Bordeaux. Lengthy aftertaste. Made to age. Drink through 2028.”*  
- Gilbert & Gaillard

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