

LOUIS

by Louis Nel

Notes on the Cabernet Sauvignon

The soil

The grapes for this Cabernet Sauvignon comes from the Helderberg area in Stellenbosch. The vineyard is 20 years old and the soil is a mixture of light gravel and koffiekliip, an orange soil with lots of iron and minerals. Supplementary irrigation is used whenever necessary.

The long wait

The time of picking is decided on by waiting for maximum maturity, while at the same time making sure the grapes do not suffer the ill effects of drought or rain later in the season. Because the soil drains so well, the grapes have to be constantly monitored to ensure that they are picked at optimum ripeness, for that particular vineyard. This most often involves endless deliberation and patience.

Harvest and fermentation

The grapes are picked by hand, destemmed, and left to start fermenting naturally. This can often take a few days to happen. During all the time on the skins (maximum about ten days), the wine is punched down and pumped over or punched down at least four times a day. Only natural yeast is used.

The philosophy is to extract as much as possible from the skins, while not leaving too much time to extract from the pips. Often European standards for ripeness are used for local grapes (like the colour of pips), which are often just a means of making sense of things in the mind of the vintner, rather than the real world.

Pressing

Th grapes are pressed softly, and the wine is immediately put in French oak barrels to start malolactic fermentation. After malo the wine is racked and sulphured, and then put back to age for a total of 24 months.

Barrels

Because such small amounts of wine are made, using barrels as containers are ideal because small batches can easily be kept separate. Only French oak barrels are used and 30% of the barrels are new. It is a lot of money to spend on barrels, but the wine's structure supports the oak and the wood is supported by the natural tannins. The oak and grape tannins are complementary, without the one dominating the other.

Bottling

Just before bottling the wine is put in a tank to settle, and then filtered lightly before bottling.

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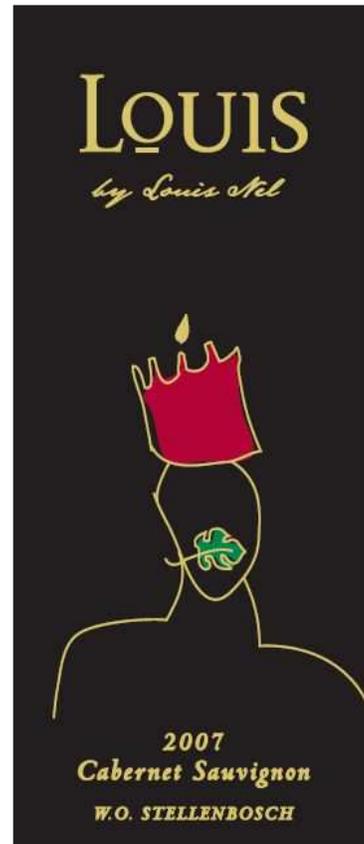
Cabernet Sauvignon 2007

ANALYSIS

pH:	3.53
Residual	2,9g/l
Sugar:	
Alcohol:	14,6
Total Acidity:	5.4g/l
Bottling Date:	July 2009
Release date:	September 2009
Soil:	Koffieklip

VARIETALS:

Cabernet	96%
Sauvignon	
Merlot	4%



Winemaker's comments:

Wild berries, ripe plum, cassis and luscious cedar flavours abound on the nose of this expressive Cabernet Sauvignon. The red berries and plum follow through onto the palate and compliment the soft chewy tannins that create a lingering finish.

Winemaking Procedure:

This wine was made from grapes in the Helderberg region, where selected parcels from the same vineyard were separately harvested, wild fermented, punched down and left to age on French oak barrels. The wine spent 24 months on French oak of which 30% was new.

Serving temperature: 16-18 °C

Food Suggestions: Beef Bourgogne, pan-fried fillet of beef with wild mushroom sauce, and oven baked brie with walnuts.