

2010 Domaine de Baal Estate Red

The 2010 Estate Red is a blend is 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Syrah, aged for 16 months in French oak (25% new barrels, 35% one year old and 40% two year old). It comes in at 15.3% alcohol. Showing its oak far more than the 2009, but its alcohol a bit less, this doesn't seem either as concentrated or as tightly-wound, but the texture is silkier and it is another big, blockbuster-style red that should be a crowd-pleaser. It is pretty sexy.

This producer unfortunately has no importer as of yet. This issue features a mini-vertical (2011, 2010 and 2009). There is some considerable promise here and the wines are in a big, modern, crowd-pleasing style. There shouldn't be much difficulty selling them.

- Mark Squires (October, 2015)

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2011 Domaine de Baal Estate Red

The 2011 Estate Red (with just Domaine de Baal on the label) is a blend of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Syrah, aged for 18 months in French oak (30% new, 45% one year old and 25% two year old). It comes in at 15.1% alcohol. In many respects, this is the most graceful and least bombastic of the trio in this issue (although that is hard to tell, given its youth, without some aeration). This is not exactly a small wine, to be clear, but the mid-palate is elegant and fresh, and it manages to hold its alcohol reasonably well. Laced with a mixture of fruit and sweet oak, it isn't exactly subtle, but it does show a bit more restraint than the powerful 2009, at least in the mid-palate. It is pretty tasty in its New World style, but not likely to show any complexity or true finesse any time soon.

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The 2009 Estate Red is a blend is 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 10% Syrah, aged for 18 months in French oak (30% new, 40% one year old and 30% two year old). It comes in at 15% alcohol. Rather heady and oaky on opening, this is often very tasty and it is beautifully constructed, with a tightly wound mid-palate. It does seem to show the alcohol a bit as it airs and evolves. While that mars the wine just a little, it is not overly intrusive. It is otherwise beautifully structured and concentrated, though. It's a modern-styled wine, but with considerable pop on the finish and plenty of concentration. Finesse will be harder to find.

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