

Prescient

FUND SERVICES

CHENIN BLANC
REPORT 2025

WINEMAG.CO.ZA



PERDEBERG

ABOUT THE WINEMAG.CO.ZA TASTING PROGRAMME 2025

Winemag.co.za will release a series of category reports throughout the year with Prescient Fund Services as sponsor. Each report is based on the outcome of a blind tasting of wines entered within a specific category.

A report includes key findings, tasting notes for the top wines, buyer's guide (wines ranked by quality relative to price) and scores on the 100-point quality scale for all wines entered. Upon publication, producers can purchase both Top 10 and regular rating stickers – consumers are encouraged to look out for these in the retail environment.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by me and further consisted of two trusted colleagues, Spencer Fondaumiere, chairman of the South African Sommelier Association, and Jolette Steyn of Wine Cellar, Cape Town merchants and cellarers of fine wine.

Ratings were done according to the 100-point system, with final scores determined through discussion and retasting when necessary, rather than relying solely on arithmetic averages.

Christian Eedes

Editor, Winemag.co.za

KEY FINDINGS

For this year's Chenin Blanc Report, sponsored by financial services company Prescient Fund Services, 63 wines from 53 producers were entered. Of these, an impressive 47 wines (75%) scored 90 or higher on the 100-point quality scale – testament to the category's overall strength.

The variety's adaptability to a wide range of terroirs is evidenced by the fact that six different production areas feature among the Top 10, these being Cederberg, Durbanville, Elgin, Franschhoek, Paarl and Stellenbosch.

Leading wines share a focus on aromatic complexity (floral fragrance, herbs, citrus, stone fruit) and textural refinement. Racy acidity and a pithy or dry finish are consistent hallmarks. A lean, energetic palate is favoured over overt weight, though concentration remains key. Winemaking shows a preference for judicious oak use (older barrels, limited new wood) and alternative vessels (concrete eggs, amphorae, foudres) to preserve fruit purity. Old-vine provenance adds depth and pedigree and hence no need to embellish unduly in the cellar. Overall, the style that predominates is one of tension, nuance, and savouriness over overt ripeness and oak, with precision and drive defining quality.

A handful of wines from the 2025 vintage were included; while generally sound, they tended to show as very primary and relatively simple – passable everyday drinking but no more.

The average price of the 47 wines to rate 90-plus is R259 a bottle and of the Top 10 is R300. Offering the best quality relative to price is the Reserve Barrel Fermented 2023 from Paarl cellar Windmeul with a rating of 90 and selling for R110 a bottle.

Also included in the tasting was a selection of Cape White Blends, eligible only if Chenin Blanc made up more than 15% but less than 85% of the final wine. Of the 15 entries, 11 scored 90 or higher. The beauty of blending lies in the creation of distinctive, often unexpectedly appealing aromatic and flavour profiles.

Perdeberg, as producer of both the Chenin Blanc and the Cape White Blend judged best overall, wins two sets of Nachtmann glasses worth R2,500 from warewashing specialist Winterhalter.

TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



Perdeberg | Best Overall
The Dry Land Collection
Courageous
Barrel-Fermented 2024

Price: R185

Total Production: 13 524 bottles Abv 14.1%

Grapes from a Paarl vineyard planted in 1985. Matured for 11 months in barrel, 20% new. Attractive aromatics of honeysuckle, herbs, citrus and peach plus a touch of flinty reduction. The palate has weight but also energy – concentrated fruit and racy acidity before a pithy finish.



Rikus Neethling
2024
(Bizoe)

Price: R185

Total Production: 3 000 bottles Abv 11.99%

Unwooded. Exceptionally fragrant, with notes of potpourri, herbs, pear, peach, and citrus. Outstanding clarity and drive, featuring pure fruit and racy acidity leading to a long, pithy finish. Taut and precise.



Vrede en Lust
Kogelberg 2024

Price: R255

Total Production: 10 000 bottles Abv 13.5%

Matured for 10 months in 225-litre barrels, partially new. Some flinty reduction before floral perfume, hay, herbs, citrus and peach. The palate is tightly wound, intense but not weighty – a dense core of fruit match bright acidity, the finish long and dry. Lean and energetic.





Cederberg Nieuwoudt Five Generations 2024

Price: R430

Total Production: 16 311 bottles Abv 13.5%

92% matured in 400-litre barrels, of which 12% were new, and 8% in concrete egg. Hay, herbs, pear, peach and citrus on the nose while the palate shows concentrated fruit and fresh acidity before a dry finish. Good delineation and flavour intensity.



Croydon Covenant 2024

Price: R200

Total Production: 1 900 bottles Abv 12.27%

Fermented and matured for 12 months in a concrete egg. The nose shows pear, peach, lime, green apple, herbs, and a subtle hint of reduction. The palate is lean and taut, with concentrated fruit and racy acidity, leading to a long, pithy finish.



Durbanville Hills Collectors Reserve The Cape Garden 2024

Price: R160

Total Production: 17 748 bottles Abv 13.36%

Fermented and matured for nine months in a combination of barrel, stainless steel tank and amphora. The nose shows flowers, herbs, pear, peach and citrus plus a little yeasty complexity. The palate is clean and pure with bright acidity. Well balanced with pleasing texture.





Warwick Old Vine 2023

Price: R610

Total Production: 4 200 bottles Abv 13%

Grapes from a Simonsberg vineyard planted in 1978. Matured for nine months in 400-litre barrels, 6% new. Complex aromatics of flowers, herbs, pear, peach, and a hint of ginger. The palate is elegant and precise, with pure fruit, lively acidity, and a dry, subtly bitter finish.



Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2023

Price: R265

Total Production: 56 800 bottles Abv 13.5%

Grapes from seven sites, half from Durbanville and half from Bottellary. Matured for 10 months in a combination of barrels, foudre and concrete. Exotic aromatics of quince, citrus, stone fruit, and hay. The palate is rich and rounded, with tangy acidity and a gently savoury finish. Excellent fruit concentration and pleasing texture.



Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2024

Price: R455

Total Production: 2 234 bottles Abv 13.7%

Grapes from a vineyard planted in 1965. Fermented and matured for seven months in old oak, amphora and ceramic egg. Peach, apricot, honey and some leesy complexity on the nose. The palate is characterful with concentrated fruit and tangy acidity before a slightly bitter finish. Luscious and full of flavour.





Knorhoek 2024

Price: R255

Total Production: 18 000 bottles Abv 13.15%

Grapes from a block planted in 1980. Fermented and matured for 10 months in 500-litre barrels, foudre, concrete egg, and stainless-steel tank. Honeysuckle, citrus, and peach with hints of vanilla and leesy complexity on the nose. The palate is rich and textured, balanced by punchy acidity and a long, savoury finish. Bold and full-flavoured.



HONORABLE MENTIONS

Because final ratings are determined by averaging the scores of three judges, decimal places come into play. As a result, the following wines fell just short of the Top 10 on 93 points:



Cavalli Reserve 2024 | Price: R230

Donkiesbaai Steen 2024 | Price: R370

Kleine Zalze Family Reserve 2023 | Price: R299

Zevenwacht Z Collection 2024 | Price: R315

BUYING GUIDE: CELLAR-DOOR PRICES FOR WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Courageous Barrel-Fermented 2024	96	R185
Rikus Neethling 2024 (Bizoe)	95	R185
Vrede en Lust Kogelberg 2024	95	R255
Durbanville Hills Collectors Reserve The Cape Garden 2024	94	R160
Cederberg Nieuwoudt Five Generations 2024	94	R430
Croydon Covenant 2024	94	R200
Warwick Old Vine 2023	94	R610
Knorhoek 2024	93	R255
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2023	93	R265
Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2024	93	R455
Cavalli Reserve 2024	93	R230
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve 2023	93	R299
Zevenwacht Z Collection 2024	93	R315
Donkiesbaai Steen 2024	93	R370
Allée Bleue 2024	92	R145
Leeuwenkuil Reserve 2024	92	R150
Daschbosch Mossiesdrift Steen 2024	92	R220
Fairview Old Vine Project Steen 2023	92	R235
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2024	92	R250
Windmeul Reserve Barrel Fermented 2023	91	R110
Kleine Zalze Heritage Vineyards Old Vine 2024	91	R131
Le Sueur 2024	91	R135
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection 2024	91	R163
The Pledge Our Old Vine 2024 (Le Grand Domaine)	91	R180
Quest Old Vine 2023	91	R190
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine 2024	91	R225
Mellish Family Vineyards Bakenkop 2023	91	R245
Flagstone Paradigm 2024	91	R255
Strydom Danièle 2023	91	R265
Creation Cool-Climate 2024	91	R275
Meinert 6CHEN 2019	91	R295
Eenzaamheid 2023	91	R300
Waterford 2024	91	R305
Van Wyk Family 2024	91	R320
Fuselage Staggerwing Old Vines 2021	91	R390
Spice Route Tarragon 2024	90	R150
Flagstone Tributary 2022	90	R160
Stellenbosch Reserve Hangbrug 2024	90	R165
Raar Skin Contact 2024	90	R188
Joostenberg Die Agteros 2024	90	R235
Kasteelberg 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	90	R244
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Cape Town 2024	90	R250
Wildeberg Terroirs 2023	90	R298
The Bothey 2024	90	R360
Thistle and Weed Brandnetel 2024	90	R375
Thistle and Weed Duwweltjie 2024	90	R375
Tokara Limited Release 2023	90	R385

COMPLETE SCORES: A-Z

Name	Wine of Origin	Score
Allée Bleue 2024	Franschhoek & Jonkershoek	92
Babylonstoren 2025	Western Cape	88
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Cape Town 2024	Cape Town	90
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2023	Coastal Region	93
Bellingham The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2024	Coastal Region	92
Bellingham Homestead The Old Orchards 2024	Coastal Region	89
Boplaas 2024	Calitzdorp	89
Cavalli Reserve 2024	Stellenbosch	93
Cederberg Nieuwoudt Five Generations 2024	Cederberg	94
Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2024	Franschhoek	93
Creation Cool-Climate 2024	Walker Bay	91
Croydon Covenant 2024	Stellenbosch	94
DaschBosch Mossiesdrift Steen 2024	Breedekloof	92
Donkiesbaai Steen 2024	Piekenierskloof	93
Durbanville Hills Collectors Reserve The Cape Garden 2024	Durbanville, Cape Town	94
Du Toitskloof 2025	Western Cape	88
Eenzaamheid 2023	Agter Paarl	91
Fairview Old Vine Project Steen 2023	Western Cape	92
Flagstone Paradigm 2024	Agter Paarl	91
Flagstone Tributary 2022	Coastal Region	90
Fuselage Staggerwing Old Vines 2021	Paarl	91
Groot Phesantekraal Anna de Koning 2024	Cape Town	88
Holden Manz Reserve 2021	Coastal Region	89
Joostenberg Die Agteros 2024	Paarl	90
Kasteelberg 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	Swartland	90
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve 2023	Stellenbosch	93
Kleine Zalze Heritage Vineyards Old Vine 2024	Coastal Region	91
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection 2024	Stellenbosch	91
Kleynood Tamboerskloof (buurman) 2024	Stellenbosch	89
Knorhoek 2024	Stellenbosch	93
Leeuwenkuil Reserve 2024	Swartland	92
Leipzig Agterstasie 2022	Breedekloof	89
Le Sueur 2024	Klein Karoo	91
Leyland 2024 (De Wet)	Rooikrans	88
Meinert 6CHEN 2019	Swartland	91
Mellish Family Vineyards Bakenkop 2023	Durbanville, Cape Town	91
Mountain Ridge The Twins 2023	Breedekloof	87
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine 2024	Swartland	91
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Courageous Barrel-Fermented 2024	Paarl	96
Quest Old Vine 2023	Breedekloof	91
Raar Skin Contact 2024	Swartland	90
Rikus Neethling 2024 (Bizoe)	Stellenbosch	95
Romansrivier Grand Reserve 2022 (Mountain Ridge)	Breedekloof	87
Spice Route Tarragon 2024	Swartland	90

Stellenbosch 1679 Bush Vine 2023 (Koelenhof)	Stellenbosch	87
Stellenbosch 1679 Bush Vine 2024 (Koelenhof)	Stellenbosch	87
Stellenbosch Reserve Hangbrug 2024	Stellenbosch	90
Stellenrust 2024	Stellenbosch	89
Strydom Daniële 2023	Stellenbosch	91
The Bothey 2024	Coastal Region	90
The Pledge Our Old Vine 2024 (Le Grand Domaine)	Stellenbosch	91
Thistle and Weed Brandnetel 2024	Stellenbosch	90
Thistle and Weed Duwweltjie 2024	Paarl	90
Tokara Limited Release 2023	Stellenbosch	90
Tokara Limited Release 2024	Stellenbosch	89
Van Wyk Family 2024	Stellenbosch	91
Vrede en Lust Kogelberg 2024	Elgin	95
Warwick Old Vine 2023	Simonsberg, Stellenbosch	94
Waterford 2024	Stellenbosch	91
Wildeberg Terroirs 2023	Paarl	90
Windmeul 2025	Coastal Region	88
Windmeul Reserve Barrel Fermented 2023	Paarl	91
Zevenwacht Z Collection 2024	Polkadraai Hills	93



DURBANVILLE HILLS



CROYDON



BELLINGHAM



KNORHOEK



VREDE EN LUST



WARWICK

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CAPE WHITE BLEND
REPORT 2025

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TOP 3 TASTING NOTES



Perdeberg | Best Overall The Dry Land Collection Rossouw's Heritage 2023

Price: R205

Total Production: 3 900 bottles Abv 13.78%

63% Chenin Blanc, 13% Grenache Blanc, 12% Verdelho, 12% Viognier. 50% of the wine matured for 10 months in second-fill 500-litre barrels. Complex aromatics, with a touch of reduction preceding soft citrus, stone fruit, spice, and an earthy undertone. The palate is dense and layered, with bright acidity and a gently savoury finish. Detailed and long, offering plenty of intrigue.



Cavalli Reserve White 2024

Price: R280

Total Production: 6 400 bottles Abv 13.24%

60% Chenin blanc, 28% Verdelho, 6% Chardonnay, 6% Viognier. Fermented and matured for seven months in barrels of various sizes, partially new. Exotic aromatics of potpourri, herbs, citrus, peach, pineapple some flinty reduction and a hint of vanilla. Dense fruit matched by tangy acidity before a gently savoury finish. Rich yet nicely balanced.



Fairview Beryl Back 2023

Price: R360

Total Production: 6 200 bottles Abv 13.65%

43% Chenin Blanc, 31% Roussanne, 26% Viognier. Fermented and matured for 10 months in a combination of stainless-steel tank, oak barrel, and clay amphora. Citrus, peach, potpourri, and spice mingle with earthy, leesy nuances on the nose. The palate shows concentrated fruit and punchy acidity, finishing savoury. Textured and well balanced.



BUYING GUIDE: CELLAR-DOOR PRICES FOR WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Rossouw's Heritage 2023	93 – Best Overall	R205
Cavalli Reserve White 2024	93	R280
Fairview Beryl Back 2023	93	R360
Piekenierskloof Heirloom White 2024	92	R190
Coterie by Wildeberg Chenin & Grenache Blanc 2023	92	R210
Zevenwacht The Tin Mine White 2024	91	R180
Vrede en Lust White Mischief 2024	90	R135
Afrikaans Vol. VII 2024	90	R220
Kloovenburg Eight Feet 2024	90	R250
Thistle and Weed Khakibos White 2023	90	R295
Strydom Siblings 2024	90	R305

COMPLETE SCORES: A-Z

Name	Wine of Origin	Score
Afrikaans Vol. VII 2024	Stellenbosch	90
Boplaas Gamka Branca Reserve 2022	Western Cape	87
Cavalli Reserve White 2024	Stellenbosch	93
Coterie by Wildeberg Chenin & Grenache Blanc 2023	Stellenbosch	92
Eenzaamheid Vin Blanc 2024	Agter Paarl	89
Fairview Beryl Back 2023	Paarl	93
Kloovenburg Eight Feet 2024	Swartland	90
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Rossouw's Heritage 2024	Coastal Region	93
Piekenierskloof Heirloom White 2024	Piekenierskloof	92
Strydom Siblings 2024	Stellenbosch	90
The Bothey Semillon Chenin Blanc 2024	Coastal Region	89
The Fledge & Co. Vagabond 2023	Western Cape	89
Thistle and Weed Khakibos White 2023	Western Cape	90
Vrede en Lust White Mischief 2024	Elgin	90
Zevenwacht The Tin Mine White 2024	Stellenbosch	91



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FAIRVIEW



CAVALLI

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