

OLD VINE
REPORT 2025

— WINE **MAG.CO.ZA** —



DONKIESBAAI

ABOUT THE OLD VINE REPORT 2025

Winemag.co.za produces category reports on a regular basis. In the case of the Old Vine Report begun in 2024, the condition of entry is that wines have to be made from Certified Heritage Vineyards (vines that are 35 years and older, registered with SAWIS and approved by the Old Vine Project).

This document contains key findings, tasting notes for the top wines, and a buyer's guide ranking wines by quality relative to price. Upon publication, producers may purchase rating stickers, which consumers are encouraged to look for in stores.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by me and further consisted of James Pietersen, CEO of Wine Cellar, Cape Town merchants and cellarers of fine wine, and Francois Rautenbach, wine and hospitality specialist.

We tasted blind, labels out of sight. Ratings were done according to the 100-point system, final scores awarded on the basis of discussion that involved retasting where necessary rather than relying solely on arithmetic averaging.

Christian Eedes
Editor, Winemag.co.za

KEY FINDINGS

To qualify as old vines, vineyards must be at least 35 years old. South Africa's registered old-vine area has grown steadily, from 2,952 ha in 2016 to 5,159 ha in 2024, now accounting for 5.9% of the country's plantings – largely due to more vineyards crossing the age threshold.

These venerable vines continue to produce white wines of striking vibrancy and complexity. Purity of fruit and freshness combine with intricate aromatics and layered flavours, while careful vinification gives texture that is typically generous without being excessively weighty. Even at their richest, these wines retain a sense of freshness, making them endlessly engaging in the glass.

Chenin Blanc dominates the old-vine landscape, representing 49% of plantings. Eight of the Top 12 wines and 29 of the 47 rated 90-plus are Chenin Blanc, reaffirming the variety's status as a national treasure. Stellenbosch hosts the largest area of old vines at 1,164 ha, yet only four of the Top 12 wines come from this district, showing that excellence is spread widely across the country.

Red wines tell a different story. Leaf-roll virus impacts them more severely, and old-vine reds generally fall a notch below their white counterparts in quality.

While the Top 12 average R267 a bottle in price and the 47 wines rated 90-plus average R346, whether this reflects a fully sustainable pricing model for growers remains an open question. Some producers are at least achieving meaningful volumes, total production of best wine overall, Donkiesbaai Steen 2025, amounting to 39 500 bottles and 515 magnums, while Kleine Zalze made 150 000 bottles of the Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc 2025 that places among the Top 12 with a rating of 94.

TOP 12 TASTING NOTES



Donkiesbaai | Best Overall Steen 2025

Price: R366

Total Production: 39 500 bottles and 515 magnums Abv 13.37%

From Piekenierskloof vineyards planted in 1986 and 1988. 70% is fermented and matured in 500-litre barrels, partially new, and 30% in concrete eggs. Enticing aromatics of hay, potpourri, citrus and peach while the palate is substantial yet focused – great fruit weight and fresh acidity before a long, dry finish.



Old Road Wine Co. Grand-Mere Semillon Single Vineyard 2023

Price: R420

Total Production: 1 350 bottles Abv 13%

From a Franschhoek vineyard planted in 1936. Spontaneously fermented and matured for nine months in mostly older oak. Citrus, peach, herbs, earth and some leesy complexity on the nose. The palate displays controlled power with dense fruit and fresh acidity before a deeply savoury finish. Pleasing texture and layers of flavour.



Villa Esposto Chenin Blanc 2025 (Klawer Wine Cellars)

Price: R156

Total Production: 2 600 bottles Abv 13.86%

From a Citrusdal Mountain vineyard planted in 1982. Matured for approximately six months in 1,000-litre barrels. Pear, peach, citrus and herbs on the nose while the palate is pure and vibrant – no shortage of fruit weight and yet taut, poised and precise.





Delheim Wild Ferment Chenin Blanc 2024

Price: R196

Total Production: 20 289 bottles Abv 13.3%

From a Stellenbosch vineyard planted in 1986. Spontaneously fermented and matured for nine months in old oak and concrete eggs. Pear, peach, citrus, herbs, and some leesy complexity on the nose. The palate is rich and creamy with well-integrated acidity and a gently savoury finish.



Diemersdal Chardonnay Reserve 2024

Price: R220

Total Production: 3 500 bottles Abv 13.05%

Grapes from a Durbanville vineyard planted in 1987. Matured for 10 months in first- and second-fill barrels. Flinty reduction before citrus and peach while the palate has excellent fruit concentration and punchy acidity before a savoury finish. Creamy in texture and full of flavour.



Du Toitskloof Old Vine Sauvignon Blanc 2024

Price: R200

Total Production: 5 200 bottles Abv 13%

Grapes from a Breedekloof vineyard planted in 1985. Fermented and matured for 100 days in a combination of new oak and stainless-steel tank. White, green and yellow fruit, floral perfume, fynbos and hay on the nose while the palate is pleasantly lean – pure fruit and racy acidity before a dry finish.





Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R176

Total Production: 150 000 bottles Abv 13%

Grapes from Stellenbosch vineyards planted between 1977 and 1989. Fermented and matured for nine months in old oak. Top notes of flowers and hay before pear, peach and citrus on the nose while the palate is lean and taut – great clarity of fruit and fresh acidity before a dry finish. Elegant, detailed and long.



Knorhoek Chenin Blanc 2024

Price: R256

Total Production: 17 400 bottles Abv 13.15%

From a Stellenbosch vineyard planted in 1980. Fermented and matured for 10 months in primarily 500-litre barrels, using French, Hungarian, and Austrian oak (about 30% new) as well as foudre, concrete egg, and stainless steel. Citrus, peach, hay, bee's wax, vanilla and spice on the nose while the palate is rich and concentrated with punchy acidity and a savoury finish. Lots of interest here.



Stellenbosch 1679 Bush Vine Chenin Blanc 2023 (Koelenhof)

Price: R260

Total Production: 2 530 bottles Abv 13.24%

From a Stellenbosch vineyard planted in 1982. Matured for 10 and a half months, 90% in new oak and 10% in amphora. Citrus, stone fruit and spice plus some waxy, earthy notes on the nose. The palate is broad and flavourful – great texture, moderate acidity, the finish long and savoury.





Joostenberg Die Agteros Chenin Blanc 2024

Price: R230

Total Production: 5 028 bottles Abv 12.5%

Grapes from a Paarl vineyard planted in 1989. Matured for 10 months in older barrels (24%), concrete "eggs" (40%) and clay amphorae (36%). Exotic aromatics of jasmine, spearmint, peach, citrus and spice on the nose. The palate is not without weight showing pure fruit and fresh acidity before a pithy finish.



Old Road Wine Co. Grand-Mere Semillon Single Vineyard 2024

Price: R420

Total Production: 4 200 bottles Abv 13%

From a Franschhoek vineyard planted in 1936. Spontaneously fermented and matured for nine months in mostly older oak but also 15% in amphora. Potpourri, hay, herbs, citrus and peach, with a touch of reduction on the nose. The palate is light-bodied and austere – good fruit clarity and fresh acidity, the finish nicely dry.



Wildeberg Terroirs Chenin Blanc 2024

Price: R306

Total Production: 11 186 bottles Abv 13.79%

From a Paarl vineyard planted in 1977. Spontaneously fermented and matured for nine months in 500- and 600-litre barrels. Complex aromatics of honeysuckle, herbs, citrus, yellow peach and spice. The palate is broad and powerful with a tangy acidity and a gently savoury finish.



BUYING GUIDE:

RETAIL PRICES FOR WHITE WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Donkiesbaai Steen 2025	96	R366
Villa Esposto Chenin Blanc 2025 (Klawer)	95	R156
Old Road Wine Co. Grand-Mere Semillon Single Vineyard 2023	95	R420
Delheim Wild Ferment Chenin Blanc 2024	94	R196
Diemersdal Chardonnay Reserve 2024	94	R220
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc 2025	94	R176
Knorhoek Chenin Blanc 2024	94	R256
Du Toitskloof Old Vine Sauvignon Blanc 2024	94	R200
Stellenbosch 1679 Bush Vine Chenin Blanc 2023 (Koelenhof)	94	R260
Joostenberg Die Agteros Chenin Blanc 2024	93	R230
Wildeberg Terroirs Chenin Blanc 2024	93	R306
Old Road Wine Co. Grand-Mere Semillon Single Vineyard 2024	93	R420
22 Families Chenin Blanc 2025 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	92	R143
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Courageous Barrel-Fermented Chenin Blanc 2024	92	R190
Klein Amoskuil The Amos Block Organic Bush Vine Sauvignon Blanc 2023	92	R225
Bloemcool Ploegperd 2023 (Fairview)	92	R300
Thistle & Weed Duwweltjie Chenin Blanc 2024	92	R375
Warwick Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2023	92	R550
Roodekrantz 1983 Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R165
Du Toitskloof Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R195
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R225
Knorhoek Chenin Blanc 2023	91	R245
Bellingham Bernard Series Old Vine Chenin Blanc Cape Town 2023	91	R250
Bellingham Bernard Series Old Vine Chenin Blanc Cape Town 2024	91	R250
Waterford Old Vine Project Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R305
Zevenwacht Z Collection Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R315
Wildeberg Amphora Semillon 2024	91	R445
Wildeberg White Semillon 2023	91	R450
Kleine Zalze Project Z Chenin Blanc 2023	91	R470
Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2024	91	R485
Perdeberg The Vineyard Collection Chenin Blanc 2025	90	R105
The Pledge Our Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2025 (Le Grand Domaine)	90	R180
Fairview Old Vine Project Steen 2024	90	R235
Kasteelberg Chenin Blanc 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	90	R244
Stellenbosch 1679 Bush Vine Chenin Blanc 2024 (Koelenhof)	90	R250
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve Chenin Blanc 2023	90	R299

RETAIL PRICES FOR RED WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Perdeberg The Vineyard Collection Cinsault 2024	92	R115
Neil Ellis Piekenierskloof Grenache 2020	92	R420
Allée Bleue Old Vine Cinsaut 2024	92	R450
Wildeberg Terroirs Cinsault 2024	91	R298
Donkiesbaai Cinsault 2024	91	R370
Piekenierskloof Carel van Zyl Grenache Noir 2024	91	R500
Meerendal Heritage Block Pinotage 2023	91	R1 250
Welgegund Old Vine Cinsault 2024	90	R395

RETAIL PRICES FOR OTHER WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Diemersdal Cap Classique NV	91	R250
Quoin Rock Vine Dried Sauvignon Blanc 2024	91	R895/375ml
Villa Esposto Muscat D' Alexandrie Straw Wine 2023 (Klawer)	90	R150/375ml



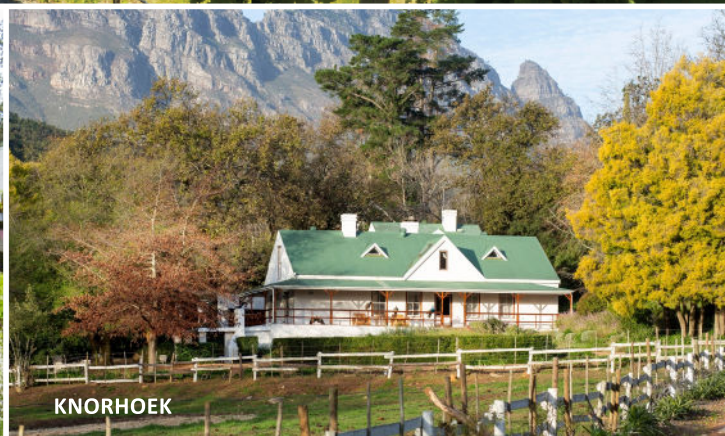
OLD ROAD WINE CO.



VILLA ESPOSTO



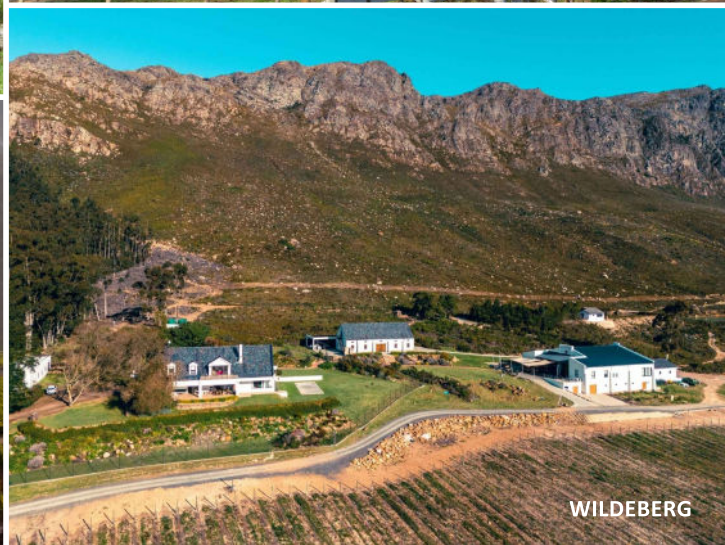
DELHEIM



KNORHOEK



DU TOITSKLOOF



WILDEBERG

CONTACT DETAILS

Editorial

Christian Eedes
christian@winemag.co.za
+27 83 454 3644
@ChristianEedes

Business Director

Jacqueline Lahoud
jax@winemag.co.za
+27 83 654 7721
@JaxLahoud