

OLD VINE
REPORT 2026

WINEMAG.CO.ZA

ABOUT THE NFB OLD VINE REPORT 2026

Winemag.co.za produces category reports on a regular basis. First published in 2024, the Old Vine Report focuses on wines made from Certified Heritage Vineyards: vines 35 years and older, registered with SAWIS and approved by the Old Vine Project. NFB Private Wealth Management joined as sponsor in 2026.

At the end of 2025, South Africa had 5,417ha of old vines out of a total vineyard area of 86,525ha.

This report presents the key findings, tasting notes for the top wines and a buyer's guide ranking wines by quality relative to price. Producers can purchase rating stickers for use on bottles, helping consumers identify the wines in store.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by me and further consisted of James Pietersen, CEO of wine merchant Brice & Burnett, 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

If the question is what old vines ultimately contribute to a wine, the answer is probably concentration. This year's Old Vine Report, however, continues to demonstrate that concentration need not come at the expense of freshness or precision. The best examples are notable for their intricate aromatics, clarity of fruit, and savoury finishes. Even the more powerful wines retain definition and energy, rather than descending into heaviness or excess.

Chenin Blanc remains the dominant force, accounting for six of the Top 10 wines and 31 of the 41 white wines rated 90 or higher.

Chenin is not the whole story, however. For the first time in three years, red wines feature in the Top 10, with two Cinsaults, Old Road Wine Co. The Rix Dollar and Rickety Bridge Regna Loca, both rated 95, demonstrating the variety's capacity for perfume and purity of fruit. Klawer Cellars Hanepoot 2026, also rated 95, shows how old vines can contribute to a fortified wine of unusual complexity, while Delheim Iconoclast Versed Vines 2024, a multi-variety blend rated 94, is an altogether fascinating proposition.

Commercial viability remains a more difficult question. Production ranges from just 1,002 bottles of Old Road Wine Co. The Rix Dollar Cinsault to 180,000 bottles of Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc. The latter demonstrates that wines from old vineyards can achieve meaningful scale, although volume alone does not establish whether growers are adequately remunerated for preserving them.

The challenge is to make these wines commercially sustainable without losing what makes them distinctive. Their value lies not merely in the age of the vines, but in the quality and character they continue to deliver.

Winner benefits

FRAM, as producer of best wine overall, wins a FERMTECH SOLUTIONS organic fermentation kit worth approximately R10,000 AND shipping services to the value of R10,000 from Aspiring Couriers.

TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



FRAM | Best Overall Stagmanskop Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R309

Total Production: 4 000 bottles Abv 13.78%

From a Piekenierskloof vineyard planted in 1987. Matured for 11 months in older oak. Top notes of flowers and herbs lead into citrus, peach and some leesy character. Dense fruit and creamy texture are offset by bright acidity. Powerful yet linear, vivid and savoury, with not a shred of excess.



Flagstone Paradigm Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R269

Total Production: 2 600 bottles Abv 14%

From an Agter-Paarl vineyard planted in 1979. Matured for four months, 50% in stainless steel tank, 50% in barrel (35% new). Flowers, herbs, citrus and peach on the nose. Lovely fruit expression and plenty of energy before an ultra-dry finish. Precise, balanced, long.



Joostenberg Die Agteros Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R239

Total Production: 6 162 bottles Abv 12.7%

From a Paarl vineyard planted in 1989. Matured for eight months in older barrels (43%), concrete eggs (47%) and ceramic amphorae (10%). Complex aromatics of pear, peach, citrus, flowers, hay and herbs on the nose. The palate is well balanced with good fruit definition and crisp acidity before a savoury finish.





Klawer Cellars Hanepoot 2026

Price: R159 (375ml)

Total Production: 839 bottles Abv 16.17%

From a Olifants River vineyard planted in 1979. Wooded. Complex aromatics, floral perfume preceding notes of sultana, nougat, bee's wax and spice. Rich and creamy, yet the fruit remains clean, invigorating acidity adding balance, the spirit addition deftly handled. Layers of flavour and a long finish.



Knorhoek Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R285

Total Production: 21 795 bottles Abv 13%

From a Stellenbosch vineyard planted in 1980. Fermented and matured for 10 months in a combination of oak foudre, concrete egg, stainless steel and barrels (30% new). Flowers, herbs and hay give way to citrus, peach and some leesy character on the nose. Dense fruit and bright acidity before a savoury finish.



Old Road Wine Co. The Rix Dollar Single Vineyard Cinsault 2025

Price: R459

Total Production: 1 002 bottles Abv 13%

From a Stellenbosch vineyard planted in 1974. Partial whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for eight months in older oak. A pronounced floral perfume and fynbos precede cherry, strawberry and plum on the nose. The palate is structured yet elegant, with concentrated fruit, fresh acidity and powdery tannins.





Rickety Bridge Regna Loca Cinsault 2025

Price: R289

Total Production: 3 500 bottles Abv 14%

From a Paarl vineyard planted in 1954. Matured for 10 months in a combination of amphora and barrel. Stems added back at fermentation. Aromas of cherry, strawberry, rose and rooibos tea. Very pretty. Pure and poised on the palate, succulent and vital, with a persistent finish.



Thistle & Weed Duwweltjie Chenin Blanc 2025

Price: R385

Total Production: 4 500 bottles Abv 13%

From a Paarl vineyard planted in 1961. Matured for 10 months in older oak. Exceptionally attractive aromatics of citrus, peach, hay and herbs. The palate is focused and harmonious with concentrated fruit and fresh acidity, the finish long and dry. Intricate and elegant.



Delheim Iconoclast Versed Vines 2024

Price: R650

Total Production: 1 175 bottles Abv 13.5%

34% Chenin Blanc, 34% Riesling, 16% Muscat de Frontignan, 14% Sauvignon Blanc, 2% Colombar. From Stellenbosch vineyards planted between 1984 and 1988. Fermented and matured for nine months in barrel. Floral perfume, cut apple, soft citrus, stone fruit, musk, vanilla and spice on the nose. Broad on the palate, with well-integrated acidity and a gently savoury finish. An intriguing wine with plenty of detail.





Kleine Zalze
Vineyard Selection
Chenin Blanc 2026

Price: R185

Total Production: 180 000 bottles Abv 13%

From Stellenbosch vineyards planted between 1977 and 1989. Fermented and matured for seven months in old oak. Attractively primary, with aromas of pear, lime, lemon, flowers and fynbos. Great clarity and concentration, with plenty of drive and a pithy, persistent finish.



BUYING GUIDE: RETAIL PRICES FOR WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
FRAM Stagmanskop Chenin Blanc 2025	96	R309
Joostenberg Die Agteros Chenin Blanc 2025	95	R239
Flagstone Paradigm Chenin Blanc 2025	95	R269
Knorhoek Chenin Blanc 2025	95	R285
Thistle & Weed Duwweltjie Chenin Blanc 2025	95	R385
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Chenin Blanc 2026	94	R185
Delheim Iconoclast Versed Vines 2024	94	R650
Villa Esposto Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2025 (Klawer)	94	R160
Du Toitskloof Old Vines Chenin Blanc 2025	94	R195
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2024	94	R285
Rickety Bridge Regna Loca Chenin Blanc 2025	94	R300
Rickety Bridge Regna Loca Semillon 2025	94	R300
Gabriëlskloof Elodie Chenin Blanc 2025	94	R450
Darling Cellars Old Bush Vines Chenin Blanc 2025	93	R235
DaschBosch Mossiesdrift Steen 2025	93	R250
Boland Cellar Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2026	92	R195
Wildeberg White Semillon 2023	92	R458
Warwick Old Vines Chenin Blanc 2025	92	R550
Bellingham Freda White Blend 2023	92	R600
Myburgh Bros. Chenin Blanc 2025 (Joostenburg)	91	R166
Diemersdal Chardonnay Reserve 2025	91	R200
Fairview Old Vine Project Steen 2024	91	R245
Simonsig Langbult Steen Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2025	91	R260
Bellingham The Bernard series Old Vine Chenin Blanc Limited Release 2025	91	R265
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2023	91	R285
Roodekrantz 1983 Chenin Blanc 2025	91	R285
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve Chenin Blanc 2025	91	R315
Wildeberg Terroirs Chenin Blanc 2024	91	R325
Waterford Single Vineyard Chardonnay 2023	91	R395
Wildeberg Amphora Semillon 2024	91	R445
Old Road Wine Co. Stone Trail Chenin Blanc 2025	91	R465

Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2025	91	R475
Haute Collection Amphora Chardonnay 2024 (Haute Cabriere)	91	R550
Paul Clüver Seven Flags Chardonnay 2024	91	R1,250
Perdeberg The Vineyard Collection Chenin Blanc 2026	90	R110
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Courageous Barrel-Fermented Chenin Blanc 2025	90	R199
Stellenbosch 1679 Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2024 (Koelenhof)	90	R250
Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Anchor Man Old Vine Chenin Blanc 2025	90	R285
Welgegund Chenin Blanc 2024	90	R310
DaschBosch Avon Clairette Blanche 2025	90	R400
Leeuwenkuil Heritage Chenin Blanc 2024	90	R510

RETAIL PRICES FOR RED WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Rickety Bridge Regna Loca Cinsault 2025	95	R289
Old Road Wine Co. The Rix Dollar Cinsault 2025	95	R459
Welgegund Old Vine Cinsault 2025	94	R395
Allée Bleue Old Vine Cinsault 2025	93	R390
Kleine Zalze Heritage Vineyards Cinsault Pinotage 2025	92	R160
The Fledge & Co. Praeteritus Bosstok Swartland Tinta Barocca 2023	92	R250
Wildeberg Terroirs Cinsault 2024	92	R325
Perdeberg The Vineyard Collection Cinsault 2026	91	R120
Piekenierskloof Carel van Zyl Old Vines Grenache Noir 2025	91	R510
Neil Ellis Grenache 2021	90	R440

RETAIL PRICES FOR OTHER WINES RATED 90+

Wine	Score	Price
Klawer Cellars Hanepoot 2026 (375ml)	95	R159
Villa Esposto Muscat D'Alexandrie Straw Wine 2026 (375ml)	94	R160



KNORHOEK



OLD ROAD WINE CO.



JOOSTENBERG



THISTLE & WEED



KLAWER CELLAR



FLAGSTONE



DELHEIM



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