



‘THE DEN’

CHENIN BLANC 2024

Swartland, South Africa

Technical Notes

The fruit for this Chenin Blanc is hand-harvested off a number of low yielding blocks on Leeuwenkuil Farm in the Swartland and from Welgegund in Wellington. On Leeuwenkuil the fruit came from 10 – 30 year old vines. Welgegund sits in the horseshoe above the town of Wellington, and the vines here were planted in 1974. This is a certified “heritage vineyard” under South Africa’s Old Vine Project, designed to preserve the surviving old vineyards of South Africa. The Leeuwenkuil grapes were cold fermented in stainless steel, using natural yeast and French oak staves. The Viognier component was fermented naturally in 2nd and 3rd fill barrels. The grapes from Welgegund were whole bunch pressed and barrel-fermented, using natural yeast. The press was very gentle, yielding only around 550 liters of juice per ton, for optimum quality. The wine was blended, settled and tank stabilized before being bottled fairly young. Winemaker focus is on creating length and palate texture, with racy acidity.

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About this Wine

The Den wines are social wines to be enjoyed with friends and family. ‘The den’ is the heart of all African wild dog communities. Did you know that South Africa produces more Chenin Blanc than the rest of the world combined? It’s true – in fact more than 30% of all acres under vine in South Africa are planted to Chenin Blanc, primarily for their enormous brandy industry. As these vineyards get older and less productive, they become undesirable to the distilled spirits industry, creating an opportunity for winemakers like Jeremy to work with them. When they’re older, the fruit has much more complexity than young Chenin Blanc vines. Using a combination of spontaneous ferments as well as cultured yeasts, Jeremy chases texture, without sacrificing crispness in his wines. He likes a delicate mix of barrel aged Chenin along with primarily tank fermented juice. These are delicious, complex wines, made with a great cause as the beneficiary. If you’re fond of a white wine style that sits somewhere between Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, then this is a wine for you. It’s the perfect “porch pounder”!

Wine Analysis

Alcohol: 12.5%

Acidity: 5.9 g/L

pH: 3.32

Residual Sugar: 3.1 g/l

- ✓ VEGAN FRIENDLY
- ✓ SUSTAINABLE
- ✗ ORGANIC
- ✗ BIODYNA MIC

Tasting Note

Grapes were harvested from Leeuwenkuil farm and several other locations in the Swartland. These vineyards are not irrigated, and the vines are primarily bush vines. You’ll find abundant fresh citrus, wet stone and tropical fruit aromas, which give way to a vibrantly bright, somewhat creamy palate. Crisp acidity and the tinniest hint of vanilla oak add to the texture, and the wonderful fruit just lingers on and on. Exceptional value means every day drinkability. Best consumed within 2-3 years of vintage. Total production 10,890 bottles.

Scores/Review

2024:

“The 2024 Den Chenin Blanc (in a screw-cap bottle) is a lot of fun with bright citrusy aromas, crushed stone and wild sage. The wine offers a crisp, lean feel to the palate, and this is exactly the bottle you need on a hot afternoon on the porch. Fruit comes from the Swartland and from heritage vines planted in 1974 in Wellington. There is an added 10% Viognier that adds honey and yellow rose. This 50,000-bottle release is partially oak aged.”

89pts - The Wine Advocate

2023: 93pts - Decanter Magazine

