

# Rikus Neethling Chenin blanc 2024



The joys about Chenin Blanc are that it never asks for an occasion to be enjoyed, often accompanied by a story to break the ice at a dinner party.

Rikus Neethling fermented this Chenin Blanc in concrete eggs, a fermentation vessel that adds quintessential richness, fruit purity and concentration to a wine. Chenin, especially, has an affinity with this method. As the shape keeps the lees suspended, it creates an action like battonage, allowing complex flavours to develop. Along with micro-oxygenation, it adds texture sans the oak flavours one would expect from wine fermented in barrels.

The wine has intense primary flavours of citrus and stone fruit but with a creamier edge than expected from wine without oak treatment.

Flavours of lemon curd, orange sponge cake, preserved peaches and dried pineapple create a beautiful medley of orange and yellow fruit. In contrast, a perfume of camomile and orange blossom adds a gentle floral note. So, who wouldn't want to dive in? And beyond its fruit purity, there is something reminiscent of salted white chocolate with the clean edge of crushed seashells, yet too delicate to tell by the aroma alone.

The wine is dry with a fresh cucumber-like acidity meandering into every corner of your mouth. A stone-like minerality emulating the salty character that peeked above the surface when nosing the wine supports its lively character, adding structure. Integrated alcohol builds on the abovementioned structural components with its gentle viscosity, adding a soothing mouthfeel. The wine is medium bodied with good intensity of flavour, adding ample length.

The key factors you are looking for when discussing the balance of this wine are fruit and freshness, and it delivers those in abundance with ample viscosity and crunch. However, the freshness you seek from a walk by the sea, the saltiness of the air, the coolness on your skin and the chalky crumble of seashells under your feet will make you love this wine too. Enjoy it with a hearty Sicilian Fish Soup with Salmon and plenty of celery and fennel. Or keep it simple with grilled and roasted vegetables and enjoy how the slight caramelization of the vegetables balances the tangy character of the wine.