

RIKUS NEETHLING

CHENIN BLANC

— 2025 —

SOUTH AFRICA



APPEARANCE

Pale lemon with silvery reflections, immediately suggesting the wine's youth and brightness.



NOSE

Pronounced and alluring, although the fruit is not immediately easy to pull apart into individual components, and that is part of its appeal. A rich aroma brings together loquat, yellow apple skin, nectarine, and melon, lifted by chamomile and orange blossom. With time, touches of acacia and ginger emerge. Rather than being simply fruit-driven, the nose has a sense of character and place; the kind of aromatic complexity that makes you go back to the glass to work out exactly what you are smelling.



PALATE

Dry, with vivacious, mouth-watering acidity that gives the wine a slightly perky attitude and carves definition into an already characterful palate.

The texture is interesting. There is something reminiscent of the flesh close to a nectarine pip, or the crunch of a firm white peach – pithy and gently phenolic rather than overtly creamy. Yellow apple skin follows through from the nose, bringing a subtle grip that eventually takes on an almond-skin quality.

Medium-bodied and juicy, although noticeably more vinous and savoury on the palate than the exuberant nose initially suggests. A dry mineral quality offsets the fruit and adds another layer, while green melon and fresh pineapple gradually emerge through the mid-palate.

Towards the end, preserved lemon, chamomile and a faint almond-paste character appear, with a saline line keeping the wine dry, composed and energetic.



FINISH

Medium (+) in length and texture. The combination of fresh acidity, stone-like minerality and gentle phenolic grip gives the wine persistence beyond the fruit itself.



CONCLUSION

Certainly memorable and far from the proverbial girl next door. There is plenty of immediate drinking pleasure here, but the wine's real strength lies in its individuality. Bright fruit and vivid aromatics make it accessible, while acidity, texture and a savoury mineral quality give it enough structure and confidence to sit comfortably on the lunch or dinner table. The acidity sharpens the fruit, the texture gives it definition, and the subtle phenolic grip leaves an impression long after the wine's initial generosity has passed.



AGEING POTENTIAL

The combination of brightness, acidity and texture should allow the wine to develop greater breadth and more complex secondary aromas over the next few years. That said, its greatest charm at present is its vitality and aromatic definition, making it particularly rewarding to drink now.



FOOD PAIRING

Lemon and herb chicken with prawns in a mascarpone-lemon sauce, served with crusty bread

THE RICHNESS OF THE MASCARPONE WORKS WITH THE WINE'S MID-PALATE TEXTURE, WHILE LEMON AND PRESERVED LEMON PICK UP ITS ACIDITY AND CITRUS CHARACTER.

Prawns bring a sweetness and salinity that echo the wine's saline finish, while chicken keeps the dish relaxed and generous.



TASTING NOTE

Don't let the colour fool you.

This Chenin Blanc is charming and will make you curious. It is pale and luminous in the glass, but there is nothing shy about the aroma. At first it is almost difficult to decide exactly what fruit you are smelling – loquat, nectarine, melon, perhaps yellow apple – because everything seems to arrive together. Then chamomile, orange blossom and a little ginger start peeking through. That inability to pin it down is exactly what makes it memorable.

On the palate, the wine changes gear. It becomes less overtly fruity and much more about texture. Think yellow apple skin, the flesh close to a nectarine stone and the slight grip you get from biting into a crisp white peach. There is also an almond-skin bitterness – subtle, but enough to give all that fruit an edge.

The middle of the palate is juicy and generous, with green melon and fresh pineapple, but a stony, saline line keeps pulling everything back towards dryness. Preserved lemon and chamomile appear towards the end, with a suggestion of almond paste adding softness before a dry, gently phenolic finish takes over.

Chenin Blanc can sometimes feel familiar because we know its vocabulary so well, but a sense of place is also woven into the texture of apple skin, pith and salinity working with the ripe, delicious fruit.

It has brightness, perfume, and plenty of immediate appeal, but also a quirky edge that makes it memorable.

