

## MUSIC SOOTHES THE SAVAGE YEAST

South Africa's DeMorgenzon Winery turns to tunes for vine health.

A growing group of scientists-cum-winemakers, including those at DeMorgenzon winery in South Africa's Stellenbosch region, are studying the effects of music on the growth of vines and grapes. Mid-20th century botanists were among the first to measure music's effect on plant growth—studies at that time showed bigger crop yields and larger vegetables. In the late 1990's, Japanese researchers measured the effects of music on both liquid and frozen water molecules. Their findings showed that classical music produced more uniformly sized, symmetrical crystals than hard rock or heavy metal, which had a deleterious effect on crystal formation.

At DeMorgenzon, a 225-acre wine estate with 135 acres of carefully tended vines, classical music—specifically Baroque—is being used to affect vine growth. Under the influence of the music, results have shown a delay in the grapes' ripening by up to three weeks and a quickening in the fermentation process, leading, the winery claims, to more balance and structure in the Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Shiraz, Sauvignon Blanc bottlings, as well as their Shiraz/Mouvèdre/Viognier blend.

For years, the wine farm has experimented with the concept of music and its effect on vines; the current month-long loop includes the works of Mozart, Haydn and Bach. According to owners Hylton and Wendy Applebaum, "both repetition and variation" are characteristics of the music they've found to be most successful.

The musical stimulation extends beyond the vineyard, too. DeMorgenzon's DJ set is heard in the fermentation tanks and barrel cellar, as well. For non-plant species, an amphitheater for live public performances amidst their vines has just been built. [demorgenzon.com](http://demorgenzon.com)

—MIKE DESIMONE AND JEFF JENSEN

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## Best Buys of the Month

Assistant Tasting Director Lauren Buzzeo's Favorite Best Buys for November

While tasting for this month's issue, I couldn't help but think about the chaos that is the holiday season. With Thanksgiving just around the corner and the gift-giving holidays rapidly approaching, everyone's looking to get the most bang for their buck. Here are 10 Best Buys to consider including a few rosés for the Thanksgiving feast. Enjoy!



**89 Laurent Miquel 2007 Nord Sud Syrah (Vin de Pays d'Oc); \$14.** A decadent Syrah with of black raspberry, black cherry, fudge brownie and coffee ice cream. Lush and creamy but not overdone. Imported by Frederick Wildman.

**88 Douglas Green 2009 Vineyard Creations Sauvignon Blanc (Western Cape); \$10.** Vibrant, tart aromas of green gooseberries and lime rind elevate the underlying hay and fresh thyme herbal-ity. Imported by Cape Wine Ventures.

**88 Excelsior 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Robertson); \$10.** Black berries, leather and cigar box unfold on the nose, while black plum and mocha flood the finish. Imported by Cape Classics.

**87 Cuvée de Peña 2009 Rosé (Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes); \$11.** A full and lush but still vibrant rosé with a gorgeous bouquet of fresh white strawberry, ripe plum and a touch of mango-infused tropical acidity. Imported by Hand Picked Selections.

**87 Domaines Astruc 2009 dA Viognier (Vin de Pays d'Oc); \$12.** Aromas of white peach, pear, sweet pea and ginseng tea with honey. The palate is full and ripe with stone fruit flavors. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA).

**87 Jean-Luc Colombo 2009 Cape Bleue Rosé (Vin de Pays de la Méditerranée); \$12.** Spicy hints of rosemary and ginger mingle with fruity aromas of nectarine, white cherry and wild strawberry. Imported by Palm Bay Imports.

**86 Juno 2009 Cape Maidens Rosé (Western Cape); \$10.** Flavors of ripe small strawberries, watermelon and juicy blood orange citrus lead through to the zippy finish. Imported by Confluence Wine Importers.

**86 Indaba 2009 Chenin Blanc (Western Cape); \$10.** Fresh and vibrant with loads of citrus, melon and tart white plum guts in the nose and mouth. Glimmers of peony, mango and honeysuckle shine through. Imported by Cape Classics.

**86 Domaines Paul Mas 2008 Chat'O Souris Syrah (Vin de Pays d'Oc); \$9.** There's a nice violet floral backbone, adding character and personality. Juicy red fruit and berries abound with accents of bay leaf and vanilla. Imported by I&B Imports.

**86 Thorntree 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Western Cape); \$9.** There a green edge to this wine that's otherwise dominated by black cherry, black currant leaf and fennel spice. Imported by IBESC Wine Distributor.