

# 24 Value Whites from South Africa

New reviews of diverse and delicious wines from the Cape region



*De Morgenzon offers a superb value-priced Chardonnay.*

**James Molesworth**

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*Tasting Highlights bring the best wines from our editors' most recent tastings to WineSpectator.com members.*

South Africa continues to quietly pump out an increasingly diverse and delicious range of value. Just in time for summer, here are two dozen of the country's whites priced at \$25 or under. There are blue-chip Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc bottlings aplenty, along with tasty Chenin Blanc (the country's best white varietal), an interesting mix of Viognier and more.

Winemaker Carl van de Merwe has helped put De Morgenzon on the map with its superb value-priced Chardonnay, which is fresh and pure and not at all tiring to drink. Fairview and its sister operation, Spice Route, are two of the more prominent labels from South Africa, along with Ken Forrester and Boekenhoutskloof. Bruwer Raats's Unwooded Chenin Blanc is one of the best introductory examples of the grape you'll find.

There are two debuts here: The new Protea line, from Johan Rupert's L'Ormarins estate, opens with a lean, bracing Sauvignon Blanc, while the Six Hats label, from the Citrusdal co-op, is yet another project from vintner Charles Back and comes with a Fair Trade seal.

**DE MORGENZON Chardonnay Western Cape DMZ 2010 Score: 89 / \$15**

Ripe and tasty, with nicely focused yellow and green apple fruit mixed with honeysuckle and verbena notes. The fresh finish shows nice length. Drink now. 1,900 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**SPICE ROUTE Viognier Swartland 2009 Score: 89 | \$23**

A ripe, lush style, with creamed peach, melon and brioche notes laced with a hint of bitter almond to keep it honest. Drink now. 2,500 cases made. —*J.M.*

**FAIRVIEW Chardonnay Western Cape La Capra 2010 Score: 88 | \$11**

Juicy and direct, with pure Jonagold apple, Cavaillon melon and heather notes, followed by a fresh, lively finish. Drink now. 5,000 cases made. —*J.M.*

**FAIRVIEW Sauvignon Blanc Darling 2010 Score: 88 | \$13**

This really crackles, with lots of lime, kiwifruit pulp and fleur de sel notes and a juicy, bright finish. Drink now. 14,000 cases made. —*J.M.*

**KEN FORRESTER Chenin Blanc Western Cape Petit 2010 Score: 88 | \$12**

This is juicy, with green melon, green fig and quince notes backed by a bright, crunchy finish. Textbook. Drink now. 17,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**LAMMERSHOEK Roulette White Swartland 2009 Score: 88 | \$25**

Juicy and friendly, with good range to the pear, almond, green fig, chamomile and melon notes. Stays bright and open on the finish. Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Viognier and Clairette. Drink now. 4,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**L'ORMARINS Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape Protea 2010 Score: 88 | \$16**

A lean, bracing style, with good cut to the lime, chive flower and chalk notes. The fresh, pure finish has nice length. Drink now. 3,500 cases made. —*J.M.*

**RAATS FAMILY Chenin Blanc Coastal Region Original Unwooded 2010 Score: 88 | \$15**

Fresh and pure, with mouthwatering lime, peach and green melon flavors. There's a chamomile twinge on the unadorned finish. Drink now. 2,200 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**RUDERA Chenin Blanc Western Cape De Tradisie 2009 Score: 88 | \$14**

Shows a mature edge, with piecrust and glazed pear notes followed by almond and quince flavors that glide through the light toasty finish. Drink now. 1,750 cases made. —*J.M.*

**SPICE ROUTE Chenin Blanc Swartland 2009 Score: 88 | \$18**

Plump and tasty, with lots of buttered brioche, fig and creamed peach notes that weave nicely through the toasty finish. Drink now. 2,500 cases made. —*J.M.*

**BOEKENHOUTSKLOOF Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape Porcupine Ridge 2010 Score: 87 | \$13**

Juicy, with good cut to the white asparagus, lemon zest and herb notes, which linger through the finish. Drink now. 2,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**CEDERBERG Bukettraube Cederberg 2010 Score: 87 | \$20**

Bright and refreshing, with lively kaffir lime, lemon zest and green plum notes laced with a hint of tarragon. Drink now. 4,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**FAIRVIEW Chenin Blanc Darling 2010 Score: 87 | \$13**

A brisk, high-toned style, with white peach, chamomile and quinine notes and a tangy, nervy finish. Drink now through 2012. 3,000 cases made. —*J.M.*

**FAIRVIEW Viognier Paarl La Capra 2010 Score: 87 | \$11**

A bright, crunchy style, showing green apple, fig and green melon fruit flavors, with a fresh, unadorned finish. Drink now. 2,500 cases made. —*J.M.*

**FLEUR DU CAP Chardonnay Western Cape 2010 Score: 87 | \$10**

A hint of matchstick gives way quickly to ripe, flattering pear and fig fruit flavors, with a juicy, light toasty finish. Drink now. 6,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**FLEUR DU CAP Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape 2010 Score: 87 | \$10**

Fresh and crisp, offering lean but tasty floral, chive and lime notes, with good length. Drink now. 2,100 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**KEN FORRESTER Sauvignon Blanc Stellenbosch 2010 Score: 87 | \$15**

A juicy, ripe style, with candied citrus peel, straw and lemon pound cake notes and a friendly, open-knit finish. Drink now. 1,200 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**GOATS DO ROAM WINE COMPANY Goats do Roam White Western Cape 2010 Score: 87 | \$10**

Juicy, with tasty green apple and melon fruit offset by a nice verbena note that adds some cut to the finish. Drink now. 10,000 cases made. —*J.M.*

**SIX HATS Chenin Blanc Western Cape 2010 Score: 87 | \$10**

Bright, with friendly honeysuckle, white peach and pear notes. The fresh finish has nice cut. Drink now. 5,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**SIX HATS Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape 2010 Score: 87 | \$10**

A lean, mouthwatering style, showing thyme, grass and lime notes, with good cut on the finish. Drink now. 5,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**MAN VINTNERS Chardonnay Coastal Region 2010 Score: 86 | \$11**

Fresh, with good cut to the melon and green apple fruit flavors, which linger gently on the finish. Drink now. 5,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**ROOIBERG Sauvignon Blanc Robertson 2010 Score: 86 | \$9**

A plump, friendly version, with lively pink grapefruit and lemon zest notes and a juicy finish. Drink now. 3,000 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**RUSTENBERG Sauvignon Blanc Western Cape Brampton 2010 Score: 86 | \$12**

A forward style, showing notes of lemon zest, straw and chamomile, with a brisk finish. Drink now. 3,500 cases imported. —*J.M.*

**SIMONSIG Chenin Blanc Stellenbosch 2010 Score: 86 | \$12**

Fresh, with green plum, green almond and pear peel notes followed by a flash of herb on the medium-weight finish. Drink now. 28,000 cases made. —*J.M.*