

# The Tea Leaf Chenin Blanc, Piekernierskloof



**Producer:** Donovan Rall  
**Winemaker:** Donovan Rall  
**Country of Origin:** South Africa  
**Region of Origin:** Western Cape  
**Grapes:** Chenin Blanc 85%, Grenache Blanc 15%  
**ABV:** 14%  
**Case Size:** 6x75cl  
**Vintage:** 2014  
**Suitable For:** Vegetarians and Vegans  
**Closure Type:** Screw Cap

## The One-Liner

Uniquely expressive Chenin from an old Rooibos tea plantation.

## Tasting Note

Complex sandy stone fruit nose with notes of crushed granite, slightly saline and wait... is that Rooibos I can smell?! Palate has firm, high-key fruit, a broad texture and quiet persistence that persists and persists. Ultimately this is a deeply satisfying single vineyard, ancient vine block with a genuinely unique terroir feel and character from an unforgettable surprisingly vineyard. The awesome 2015 vintage reflects all of the above but the drop of Grenache Blanc from the same block in this vin...



## Producer Details

You know when something feels 'just right'... you can't explain it... it just 'IS'? Well, that's how we feel about Donovan Rall who we think is simply one of the biggest talents in South Africa! The towering talent of this itinerant winemaker impressed all last year with the Vuurberg blends, and the new vintages are something else. It was only a matter of time, then, before we hand-bagged him into working with us on a small Boutinot South Africa project.

Donovan trained with Eben Sadie and Miles Mossop before doing his own thing, and the influence shows but these are very much his own take and finds. Crafted at Zorgvliet's garagiste studio winery, Donovan has put together a pure Chenin and Syrah – in fact his first ever straight varietal wines.

## In The Vineyard

Technically, these are 70 year old bush vines but classified as 40 y/o (because at this time, classification wasn't the 'thing'). This single rocky slope is also home to South Africa's highest rated Grenache block and grows hug-a-mug with the regions indigenous rooibos tea plants. Because rooibos cannot be cultivated and only grows wild, where it does grow, even it that be in the middle of your ancient Chenin block, you have to let it be!

## Food Recommendations

Quiches, frittatas and omelettes; simply cooked fish dishes, scallops, salt and pepper squid or fishcakes; light seafood pasta dishes and risottos; salads or sushi.

## In The Winery

The fruit is stolen away at night or in the small hours of the morning in a chilled grocery truck, had sorted at Zorgvliet winery by Donovan Rall. It's then naturally fermented in old old wooden barrels and steel, portions of which take up to 10 months to compete. Finally, the wine is gently racked and bottled - only 4000 bottles in total.

## Awards & Press

2015 Vintage: Decanter World Wine Awards 2016 - Bronze

2014 Vintage: IWSC 2015 - Silver

2014 Vintage: Standard Bank Chenin Blanc Top 10 Challenge 2015 - winner

2014 Vintage: DWWA 2015 - Gold

2014 Vintage: IWC 2015 - Silver

2014 Vintage: "From the very northerly region of Piekenierskloof which boasts loads of old, dry-farmed vineyards, this is a naturally fermented Chenin with plenty of colour and an earthy, sage, stone and apple nose, and big thrusting palate where those bold flavours are just edged with honey. There is a creaminess from some old barrels (we guess) but it always retains that cool mineral intensity. Impressive." 90 Points. The Wine Gang November 2015

2014 Vintage: Wine of the Week "Sourced from vineyards at 750 metres (which is high for South Africa), this was made by the talented Donovan Rall from the under-rated Piekenierskloof region. Tangy, refreshing and crisp, it's tauter than some Cape Chenins with apple, pear and herbal notes and a creamy mid palate. 91 points" Tim Atkin.com 2/11/15

2014 Vintage: "Intense and impressive, with marine aromas alongside apricot, lemon and acacia. The palate is tightly structured, yet still has high levels of viscosity and layers of minerals, spice, oak, yellow stone fruit and fabulously integrated acidity." DWWA 2015, Judges Comments

2013 Vintage: "'Soft, rich, silky and aromatic,' said Sandro Lyhs of Oxo Tower Bar. 'Apple fruit with a slightly yeasty character, fresh balanced acidity and a waxy mouthfeel,' added William Sheard of Donostia Restaurants." Sommelier Wine Awards 2015, Judges' Comments