

AA Badenhorst Family Wines,
Grensloos Chenin Blanc 2024
Swartland, Swartland, South Africa



PRODUCER

Neal Martin describes Adi Badenhorst as someone who “epitomises the carefree spirit” of the Swartland, a fitting reflection of both the man and his wines. Having grown up on a Constantia wine farm, trained at Elsenberg and gained experience at Château Angélus, Alain Graillot and Rustenburg Estate, Adi founded A.A. Badenhorst Family Wines with his cousin Hein in 2008 on the Paardeberg's Kalmoesfontein farm. Home to outstanding old bush vine Chenin Blanc, Cinsault and Grenache planted between the 1950s and 1970s, the vineyards sit on varied slopes and ancient granite, quartz and iron-rich koffieklip soils that give fragrant, characterful wines. Through attentive, hands-on farming and minimal-intervention winemaking, Adi aims to express the true character of the Swartland.

VINEYARDS

Grensloos Chenin Blanc is a blend of fruit from dry-farmed bush vine vineyards on Jakkalsfontein and Kalmoesfontein farms in the Paardeberg region of Swartland. Planted between 1966 and 1978, these low-yielding vines (approx. two tons/ha) grow in decomposed granite soils, with smaller fractions of coarse yellow granite and clay, contributing to the wine's mineral tension and textural depth.

VINTAGE

The 2024 vintage began with good winter rainfall, replenishing water reserves and supporting early vine development. However, once winter ended, rainfall ceased entirely, resulting in a very dry growing and ripening season. The drought conditions led to small yields and stressed berries. Harvest commenced in mid-January, approximately two weeks earlier than usual, due to the accelerated ripening caused by the dry conditions. Despite the challenges, the fruit showed intense concentration and structure, particularly from older bush vines. The wines from 2024 reflect the resilience of the Swartland's vineyards, with firm acidity, mineral tension, and depth of flavour.

VINIFICATION

Harvest dates vary across the vineyards due to differing soils and slopes. Grapes are picked early and cooled overnight in a refrigerated room before being whole-bunch pressed together, blending the sites from the outset. Fermentation occurs naturally in a mix of old French oak 1,200-litre foudres and small concrete tanks. The wine remains on its primary lees for 10 months, and is bottled after 12 months of ageing, without fining or filtration.

TASTING NOTES

The nose opens with aromas of white peach, quince, honey, and orange blossom. The palate is rich and creamy, layered with stone fruit and citrus, balanced by zesty acidity and a crisp, mineral finish. A complex, textural Chenin Blanc shaped by old vines, lees ageing, and foudre fermentation.