Chenin blanc International Celebration - a report back

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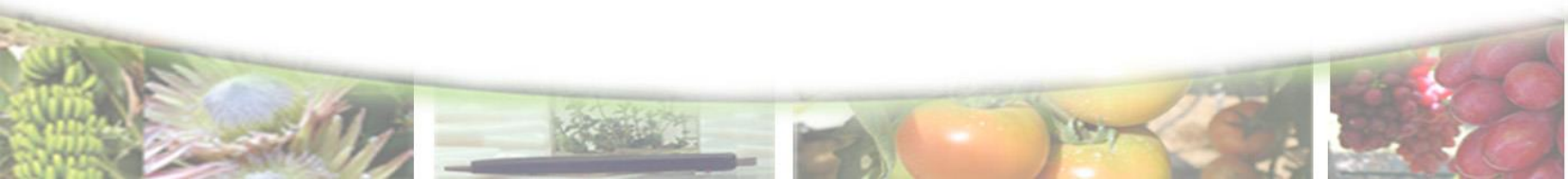
Protea Hotel, Technopark, Stellenbosch, South Africa
26 November 2025



Acknowledgements

SAJEV Best article prize 2023

SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF ENOLOGY AND VITICULTURE

The Editor, Prof Leon Dicks, and his 2023 panel.

SASEV
South African Society for Enology & Viticulture

The SASEV Board of 2023.

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Airfare and time off

Take home message

- Do you have a passion for wine, and Chenin blanc in particular?
- Do you enjoy eating good food in the company of wine-lovers?
- Chenin blanc symposium in the Loire Valley, France.
- Wine tasting, lectures, heritage and lots of fun!
- Disclaimer – I don't speak French…

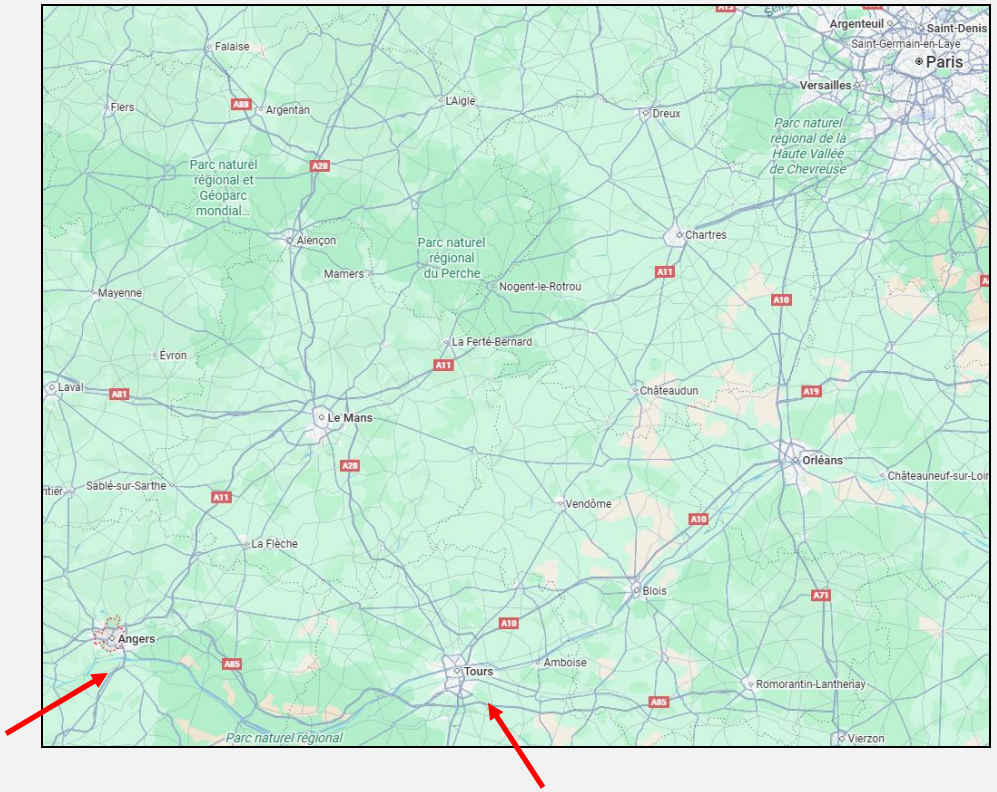
Before the symposium, a welcome to the Loire Valley

Introduction

- 5 July 2025: Angers – Registration and Welcome (18 South African delegates)
- 6 - 7 July 2025: Anger (transfer to Vouvray)
- 8 July 2025: Vernou-sur-Brenne, Vouvray
- 9 July 2025: Chenin in red wine territory (Chinon, Touraine)

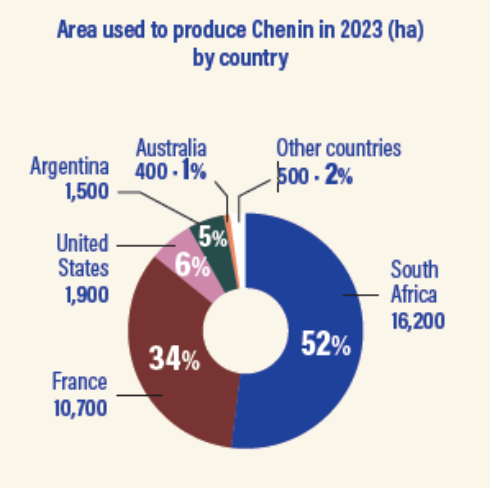
CHENIN BLANC INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION

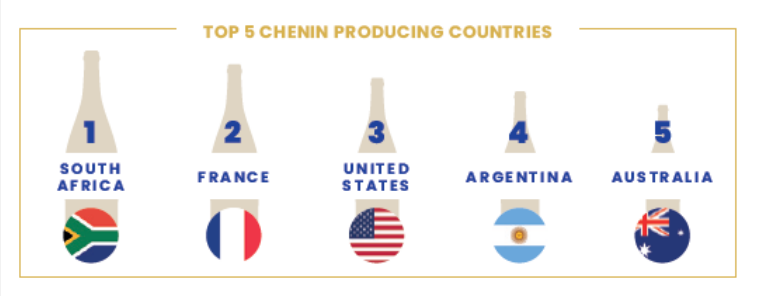
Neil JOLLY
ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij
ZA



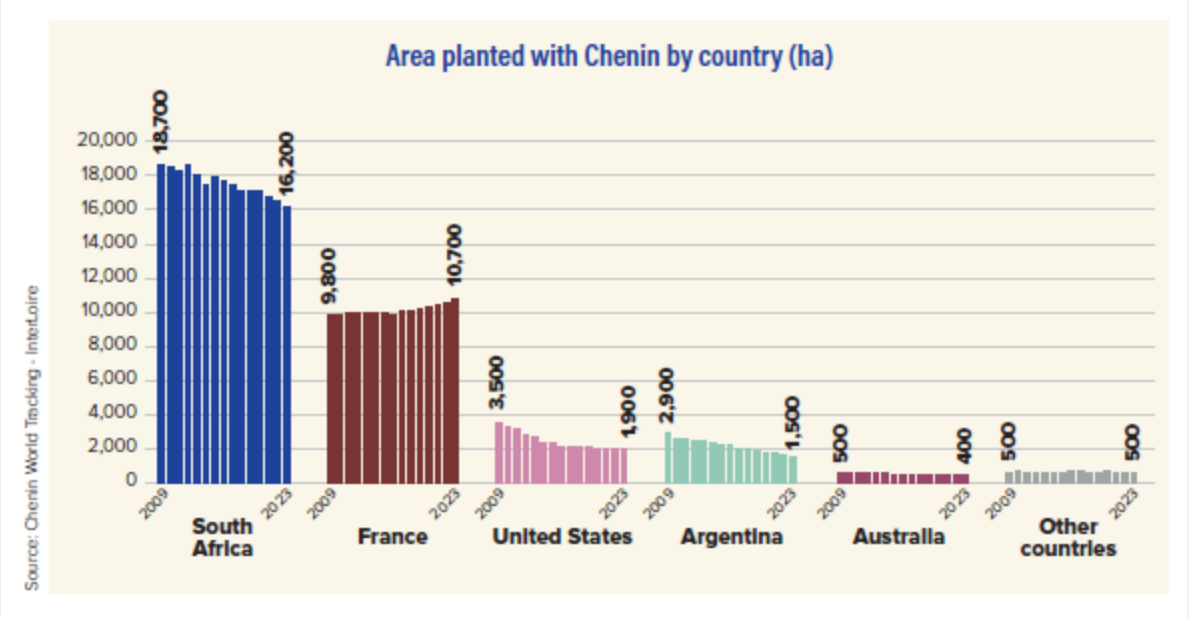
Chenin blanc facts

- 29 countries produce Chenin blanc, 98% in five countries.





Sadly, declining ha in SA

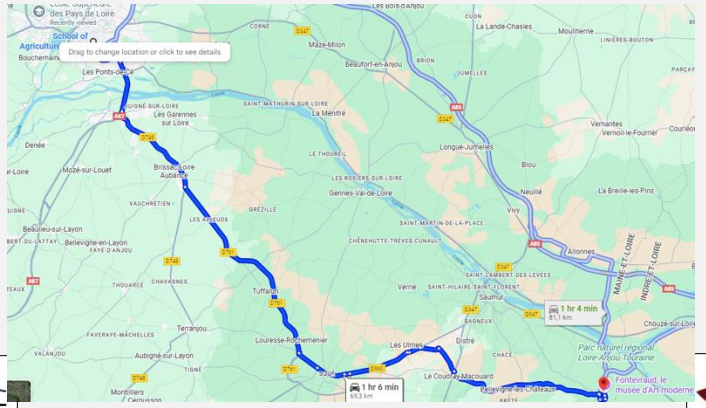


Day 1: Ecole Supérieure des Agricultures, Angers

THE PLANT: The first day focused on analyzing the specifics of Chenin Blanc.

- Cultivating Responsible Viticulture.
- The Geology of Terroirs.

Afternoon: Departure to the Abbey of Fontevraud.



Day 1: Abbey of Fontevraud

- Geosensory Tasting Masterclass - tactile sensations on the palate.

- 400 Chenin blanc wines from around the world.
- Tour of the Abbey.

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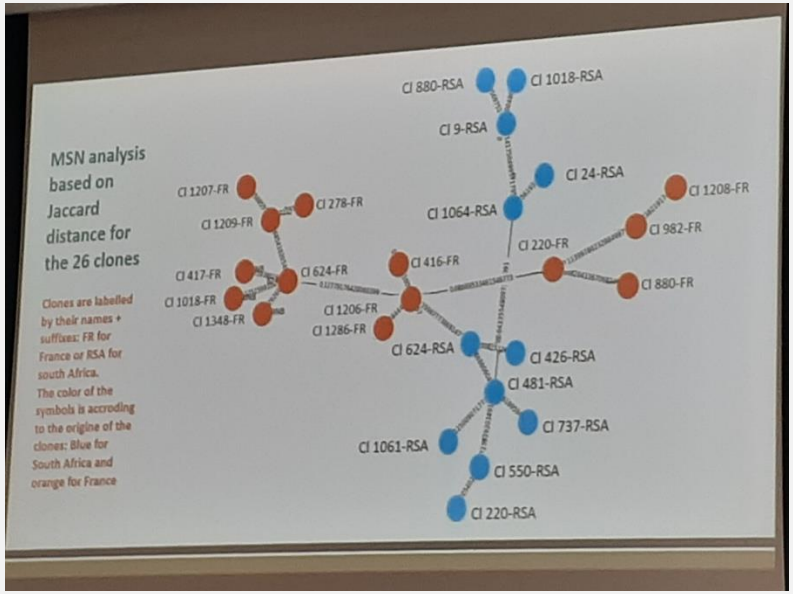
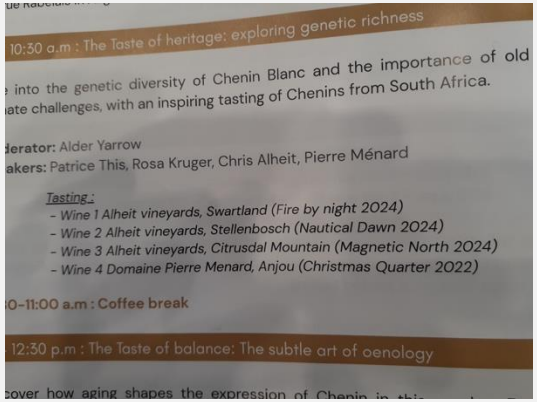
Day 2: Ecole Supérieure des Agricultures, Angers

THE PLACE : The second day was dedicated to the places and various local factors that shape the different expressions of Chenin Blanc, a grape variety that is highly sensitive to its environment and growing conditions.

- The Taste of Heritage: Exploring Genetic Richness.
- The Taste of balance: The subtle art of oenology.
- Visit 5: The Sparkling World of Loire's Fine Bubbles!




10:30 a.m : The Taste of heritage: exploring genetic richness

into the genetic diversity of Chenin Blanc and the importance of old
ate challenges, with an inspiring tasting of Chenins from South Africa.

erator: Alder Yarrow
akers: Patrice This, Rosa Kruger, Chris Alheit, Pierre Ménard

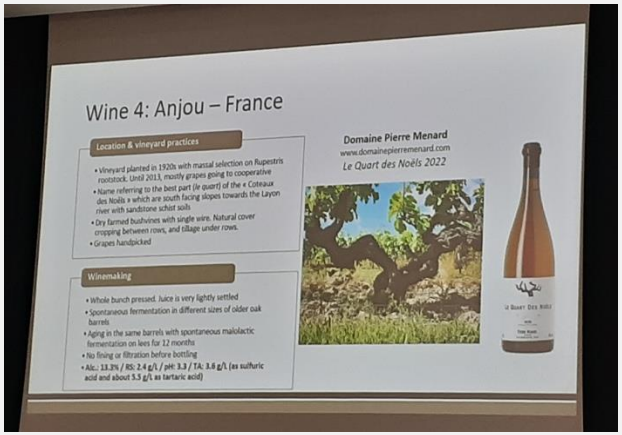
Tasting :
- Wine 1 Alheit vineyards, Swartland (Fire by night 2024)
- Wine 2 Alheit vineyards, Stellenbosch (Nautical Dawn 2024)
- Wine 3 Alheit vineyards, Citrusdal Mountain (Magnetic North 2024)
- Wine 4 Domaine Pierre Menard, Anjou (Christmas Quarter 2022)

0-11:00 a.m : Coffee break

12:30 p.m : The Taste of balance: The subtle art of oenology

over how aging shapes the expression of Chenin in

Vines planted in 1920's



Day 2: Sparkling wine La Maison Edonis

- Visit 5: The Sparkling World of Loire's Fine Bubbles!
- Transfer to Tours/Vernou-sur-Brenne

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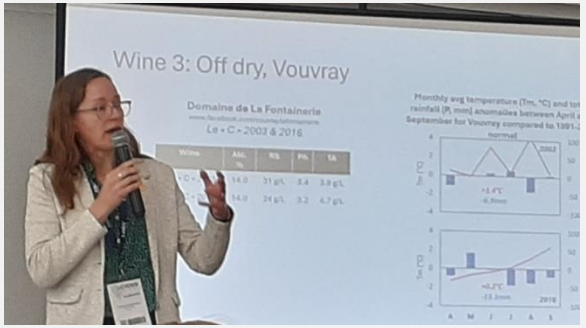
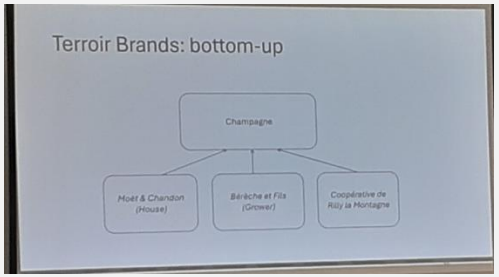
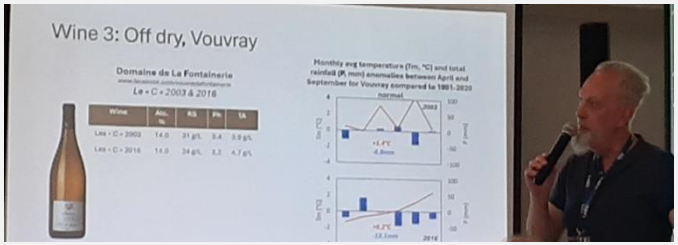
Day 3: Domaine Hôtel-Noble in Vernou-Sur-Brenne and excursion

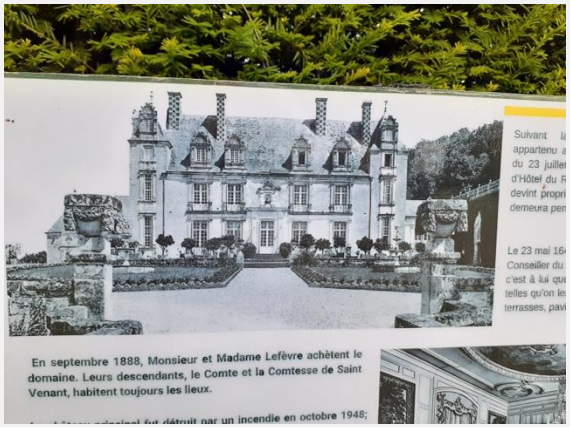
THE PERSONALITY: The third day was dedicated to the individual and collective identities of Chenin blanc, aiming to support and promote this grape variety on the international stage.



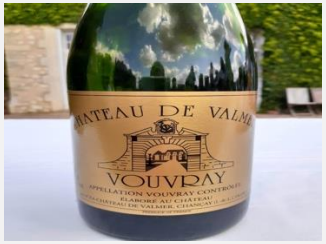


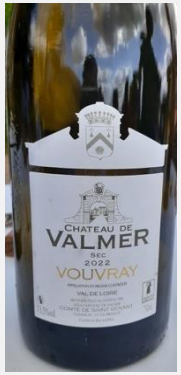


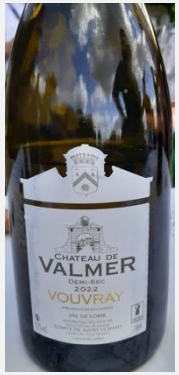
Day 3: Excursion to Chateau de Valmar



Tank lined with glass tiles







Grolleau grape

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Day 4: Chinon excursion: Chenin in red wine territory (Chinon, Touraine)

Visit 1 - Chenin in Red Wine Territory

Because the world of wine will never cease to surprise us, come and discover Chenin Blanc new expression in terroirs traditionally dominated by red wines.

Between exceptional terroirs and the passion of winemakers, we will traverse landscapes shaped by the Loire, Vienne, and Indre rivers, true markers of typicity.

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Farewell Loire valley

South African delegates

Chevalier L'Ordre de la Chantepleure Vouvray

Knights of the Order of the
Brotherhood of Chantepleure Vouvray
- Ten new knights mostly South Africans

Thank you!

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