

Alheit Vineyards

Magnetic North 2024 is a luminous old-vine Chenin Blanc from Citrusdal Mountain, weaving grapefruit, rooibos, saline earth and mountain tension into a wine of rare power and poise.

Magnetic North Chenin Blanc 2024

, South Africa



Region and Vineyards

Magnetic North comes from Citrusdal Mountain, also known as Skurfberg, on the wild north-western edge of the Cape, where elevation and isolation create a distinctive setting for old-vine Chenin Blanc. The 2024 is sourced from Arbeidseind farm, from two dry-farmed, ungrafted parcels on a high mountain ridge at 520 metres. Their gentle south-east-facing slope and **very red, iron-rich sandy soil over red clay** give the wine its particular combination of brightness, depth and savoury mineral resonance.

The vines were planted in 1981 and 1984, together covering about 2.8 hectares and usually yielding only 1 to 2 tonnes per hectare. These are revered bushvines, prized for natural concentration rather than volume. In the glass, that site translates into grapefruit, rooibos, earth and salinity, with **old-vine precision** and a soaring, tensile shape that makes Magnetic North feel both powerful and finely etched.

Winemaking

Magnetic North 2024 is 100% Chenin Blanc, made from hand-sorted fruit that was whole-bunch pressed to preserve purity, structure and natural vineyard detail. The juice was only very lightly settled, remaining deliberately cloudy, and no additions were made to the raw juice. Fermentation was spontaneous, driven by wild yeasts in **one foudre and one cement egg**, lasting about one month.

The wine spent around 12 months on lees before resting for a further five months in tank on fine lees, with no fining before bottling. This quiet, low-intervention élevage builds texture without imposing obvious oak, allowing citrus, fennel, tea-like savouriness and salinity to lead. The 2024 was bottled in May 2025, with 13.65% alcohol, 1.5 g/L residual sugar, 6.04 g/L total acidity and a pH of 3.26.

Alcohol :13,65 %

Composition: 100% Chenin Blanc

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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Bright straw-gold with a polished sheen, suggesting concentration, freshness and fine lees-derived texture.
- **Aroma:** Grapefruit, lemon rind, pomelo, pear and quince rise first, followed by rooibos, sliced fennel, smoked tea, lemongrass, saline earth and a subtle mineral echo.
- **Palate:** Medium to full-bodied, intense and precise, with citrus pith, Anjou pear, quince, grapefruit jelly and a savoury phenolic grip, carried by bright acidity and a remarkably long, salty, reverberating finish.

Did you know?

The name Magnetic North comes from the vineyard's position a few degrees off true north from the Alheit cellar, roughly on magnetic north. The iron in the soil, itself a magnetic element, adds a beautifully apt layer of meaning, while the fact that magnetic north is always moving gives the wine **a sense of distance and pursuit**.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Grilled turbot with fennel and lemon:** The wine's grapefruit, fennel and saline notes echo the dish, while its structure supports the fish's richness.
- **Roast chicken with preserved lemon:** Citrus brightness and savoury depth lift the roasted skin, while the wine's texture matches the tenderness of the meat.
- **Seared scallops with brown butter:** Magnetic North has enough concentration for the butter, while its acidity and salty finish sharpen the scallops' sweetness.
- **Pork tenderloin with apple and sage:** Chenin's orchard-fruit core and herbal detail work beautifully with apple, sage and gently caramelised pork.

97

Robert Parker (RP) : 97 Points (2024)

A complete wine in both aroma and mouthfeel, the Alheit Vineyards 2024 Citrusdal Mountain Magnetic North delivers intensity and texture from a high-elevation site at roughly 540 meters planted to own-rooted Chenin Blanc vines now in their mid-40s. Drawn from massal selections prized for their genetic diversity, the wine moves firmly into a grapefruit jelly, Anjou pear and mineral spectrum, with a noticeable phenolic bite that shapes a linear, precise profile. The wine's structure feels architectural in form, like a steel skyscraper, carrying height and clarity. A persistent mineral finish underscores that extreme focus.

93 vinous

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 93 Points (2024)

The 2024 Magnetic North comes from a massal selection of 2.8 hectares of Chenin Blanc planted on its own roots in 1981 and 1984 in Skurfburg, which Alheit mentioned has not been infected by leafroll. This has a slightly yeasty bouquet, with scents of melted wax and a little grilled hazelnut. The palate has a slightly sharp entry, with grapefruit and sour lemon, edgy and focused, with a hint of rooibos on the persistent finish. Not perhaps the crowd-pleaser like Nautical Dawn, but a fascinating and engaging wine.