



- **Country:** South Africa
- **Region:** Coastal Region
- **Subregion:** Stellenbosch
- **Vintage:** 2017
- **Colour:** White
- **Grape Variety:** Chenin Blanc
- **ABV:** 14%
- **Bottle Size:** 75cl
- **Closure:** Cork
- **Style:** Rich and fruity
- **Drink With:** Grilled chicken, Caesar Salad, Fish in general and seafood too

## GERRARD SEEL: WINE MERCHANTS TO THE TRADE SINCE 1984

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## DEMORGENZON RESERVE CHENIN BLANC - STELLENBOSCH

<https://gerrardseel.co.uk/products/demorgenzon-reserve-chenin-blanc-stellenbosch>

DeMorgenzon Reserve Chenin Blanc is a top drawer white wine coming from the decomposed granite soils of Stellenbosch. The aromas are packed with notes of white flowers and peaches with hints of pear and spice behind. It is perfectly balanced with bright mouth-watering acidity to bring the palate alive and although excellent to drink by itself, it makes a wonderful partner to food.

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### ABOUT THE GROWER

DeMorgenzon was originally a section of Uiterwyk, one of the oldest farms in South Africa. DeMorgenzon, "the morning sun", was so named because it is the first part of the Stellenbosch Kloof to see the sun thanks to its aspect and its altitude. The estate covers the top southern and eastern slopes of Ribbokkop, overlooking the pinnacle of Kanonkop, and the mild climate is ideally suited to the production of quality grapes. In 2003, Wendy and Hylton Appelbaum bought DeMorgenzon and they have transformed the estate over the past few years.

The Applebaums are committed to sustainable and appropriate agriculture at DeMorgenzon, farming naturally and respecting the vine as a part of a viable and varied ecosystem, rooted in a living soil. The estate is focussed upon producing excellent wines that express their unique terroir and fruit character within a classic structure. The winemaking philosophy is that South Africa's best wines are a combination of New World-style fruit and Old World-style elegance. A relatively cool climate and low humidity gives DeMorgenzon wines that have personality, fruit, flavour and length, but without aggressive tannins.

Approximately 10% of DeMorgenzon has been set aside for the restoration of Renosterveld. 15 hectares of pine forest and assorted invasive alien species have already been removed and the process of clearing the occasional Port Jackson and wattle is ongoing. Renosterveld is one of the most threatened habitats in the Cape Floral Kingdom, because so little remains. Less than 1% of Renosterveld habitat is currently formally protected. Along with Fynbos, Renosterveld is a dominant vegetation type in the Cape Floral Kingdom.

According to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, the Cape Floral Region is of "outstanding universal significance to humanity", and "one of the richest areas for plants in the world". "Its plant species diversity, density and endemism are among the highest world-wide," and it has been identified as one of the world's 18 biodiversity hot-spots.

Although the smallest, the Cape Floral Kingdom is the richest of the world's six floral kingdoms, and the only one to be contained within a single country. A stretch of land and sea spanning 90000 square kilometres, or 0.05% of the earth's land

area, the Cape Floral Kingdom contains roughly 3% of the world's plant species. That equates to about 456 species per 1000km<sup>2</sup>. South Africa has the third-highest level of biodiversity in the world - the Table Mountain National Park alone has more plant species within its 22000 hectares than the whole of the British Isles or New Zealand.

The consequences are already visible. A long-dry spring in one of the kloofs has bubbled to the surface. In line with their belief that they must farm in harmony with nature, the Applebaums are restoring the original vegetation in some areas and creating a bio-diverse habitat in their vineyards. They are also experimenting with indigenous cover crops at DeMorgenzon.

DeMorgenzon is a member of the Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI), a pioneering partnership between the South African wine industry and the conservation sector. BWI's goals are to minimise the further loss of threatened natural habitat and to contribute to sustainable wine production, through the adoption of biodiversity guidelines by the South African wine industry.

At DeMorgenzon, music is played to the vines and to the wines twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, via speakers strategically placed in the vineyard and in the cellar. The effects of sound and music on plant growth is an intriguing subject and has fascinated many a horticulturist over the years. Although not much scientific investigation has been undertaken, a handful of research papers have reported on the effects of music on plant growth since Charmoe studied the effects of sound waves on the budding of barley in 1972. All have reported positive results from the playing of harmonious or melodious music to plants. Research has been carried out.

Reports of the growth of many record-breaking fruits have been attributed to music. For example, French scientists cultivated a 2kg tomato, and British scientists produced a 13kg beet (Hou and Mooneyham, 1999). Recent scientific studies undertaken at Bilkent University in Turkey, in cooperation with the Azerbaijan Government Music Academy, found that classical music has positive effects on root growth.

Why play music to vines? In 1623, Galileo Galilei observed that the entire universe "is written in the language of mathematics", and it is remarkable the extent to which science and society are governed by mathematical ideas. Even more surprising, perhaps, is that music, with all of its passion and emotion, is also based upon mathematical relationships. Such musical notions as octaves, chords, scales, and keys can all be demystified and understood logically using simple mathematics.

Whilst what is regarded as melodious, harmonious, or tuneful is ultimately subjective, there seem to be physical justifications for the elements of music that most appeal to people. Much of music consists of melodic and rhythmic patterns put together in an orderly, but creative manner. For many people, the scientific approach to music reached its height in the Baroque and, at DeMorgenzon, they feel its greatest proponent was Johann Sebastian Bach - hence the preponderance of his music on their playlist.