

# RISEING STARS OF TERROIR

*The 2025 Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year Finalists*

**The 2025 Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year awards recognise four emerging talents shaping South Africa's next generation of standout wines.**

South Africa's future as a winemaking region is bright and full of promise. The Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year title recognises the country's most exciting up-and-coming talent. It highlights young professionals who combine technical skill with curiosity, creativity, and a commitment to excellence. The 2025 finalists showcase four distinct philosophies, four unique sites, and four compelling interpretations of what modern South African wine can be. From amphora-aged Chenin to expressive Robertson Chardonnay, these wines offer a clear sense of place and purpose.

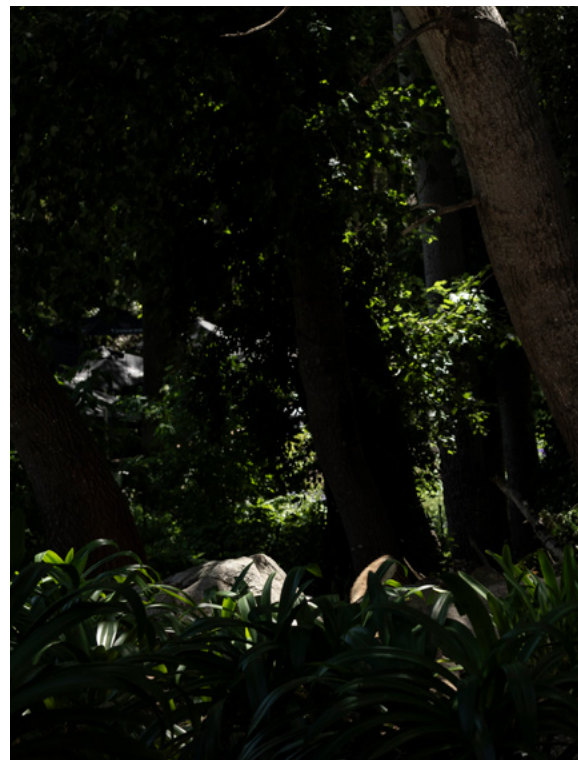
Together, the finalists reveal a new chapter for local wine. Their energy, precision, and adaptability reflect a generation ready to push boundaries while honouring the foundations of the industry.





**NARISSA PIETERS**  
***Rustenberg Wild Ferment***  
***Sauvignon Blanc 2024***

Curiosity sparked Narissa Pieters's interest in winemaking, and the craft's blend of science and creativity has kept her inspired. Her Wild Ferment Sauvignon Blanc 2024 is produced from one of Stellenbosch's highest-altitude vineyard blocks, where cool mountain air and granite soils shape concentrated fruit. Natural fermentation allows terroir to speak clearly, while careful barrel selection adds texture. Narissa loves the hands-on nature of the job, from vineyard to bottle. Her long-term aspiration is to craft an iconic South African wine defined by authenticity and consistency.



**GERNÉ VAN ZYL**

***Chamonix Old Vine Steen 2024***

Gerné van Zyl combines scientific curiosity with a deep respect for heritage vineyards. Her Old Vine Steen 2024 comes from a block planted in 1965, and the wine is produced in amphora to preserve purity and avoid masking

its natural character. Only 1,400 bottles were made. The wine shows minerality, stone fruit, and quiet power. For Gerné, each bottle is a captured moment, a way of sharing a season and a place with someone in the future. Her goal is to honour tradition while continually pushing standards upward.





**LOÏC DU TOIT**  
***De Wetshof Finesse***  
***Chardonnay 2024***

Raised in Stellenbosch and influenced by a family who appreciated fine wine, Loïc du Toit followed his interest in vineyards to Elsenburg, and later into his role as head winemaker at De Wetshof, a career highlight. His finalist entry, the Finesse Chardonnay 2024, focuses on balance. It expresses Robertson's elegance through a careful blend of fruit and oak, always guided by a philosophy of precision and honesty. Loïc views winemaking as a partnership between people and nature. He hopes to make every vintage count, producing wines that express origin with clarity.









**DANIELA JANSEN**  
***Saronsberg Viognier 2023***

Saronsberg's Daniela Jansen brings a fresh perspective to Rhône-style whites. After studying Cellar Technology at Elsenburg and completing international harvests, she joined Saronsberg, which she still considers an important milestone. Her finalist wine, the Saronsberg Viognier 2023, delivers balance, refinement, and varietal honesty. Barrel fermentation and 11 months of ageing create structure and complexity, yet the wine remains elegant. Daniela is inspired by the transformation from fruit to bottle, and her ambition is to produce wines that encourage more young women to enter the profession. ⑩