

Champagne Warrior

Taking You Back to 1522

Issue 14 July 2012

www.champagnewarrior.com

Producer of the Year Philipponnat



Champagne Warrior Mission

**To provide wine lovers with reliable, accurate,
and descriptive details that will enable an informed
purchasing decision on Champagne and sparkling wine**

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Champagne Warrior™

Issue 14

July 2012

**The Champagne Warrior
is
Brad Baker**

Edited by Megan Bushnell

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Humble Pie



The location: Veuve Clicquot cellars in Champagne. The topic of discussion: understanding the impacts of age, disgorgement, and dosage on the house wines.

Neither myself nor the other participants had ever tasted the same wine under different disgorgement and dosage regimes specifically to discern resulting differences in taste (if there was any). So we decided to test ourselves in what we considered to be a fun learning experience. To add an extra challenge, we turned it into a game: why not taste them blind? We would know the three wines we were tasting, but not which was in each glass.

And just like that in front of me sat three innocent-looking glasses of Champagne. In each was a different version of the 1989 Veuve Clicquot Rosé, and on paper, the differences were striking. First, we were given the original release, which was disgorged in 1996 and dosed at 9 g/L; second, the *Cave Privée* version, which was disgorged in late 2008 and dosed at 4 g/L; and finally, the third version of the Rosé was disgorged just that morning and given no dosage. All of the wines had been kept in

the Clicquot cellars for their entire lives, so storage was not a variable. In fact, I expected that distinguishing each by taste would be quite easy.

I mean, how hard could this be? A single blind tasting of a mere three wines having undergone very different disgorgement and dosage regimes was about as easy a test as I could imagine. Besides, odds were pretty good that anyone with a modicum of knowledge would be able to get at least one right, and then it was 50/50 to guess the other two. (And may I note that I was not the only one who was overly sure of himself, either.)

The first wine tasted very ripe, fresh, tart, and dry. This was easy to deduce as the fresh disgorgement with no dosage. The second wine was a bit more difficult to pinpoint, as it displayed rich biscuits and berries, was quite round, and ended with a hint of dryness – my guess was the original release. The final glass was full of fresh fruit with floral notes and a bright tartness. It was my favorite of the three and, based on past experiences, I

was sure it was the *Cave Privée*. At the reveal it turned out that I had guessed wrong on all three: the first was the *Cave Privée*, the second was the non-dosage bottle, and the third was the original release. You might think the winemakers did better at this little game. They didn't. No one got more than one correct.

So as a group, we embraced the only logical conclusion: that the evolution of Rosé Champagne is simply more difficult to understand than it is for 'regular' Champagne. To further reassure our bruised egos we decided to try the same tasting format with a white wine – the 1990 *Veuve Clicquot Vintage*. Blind, we would taste the original release disgorged in 1997 and dosed at 9 g/L, the *Cave Privée* release disgorged in late 2008 and dosed at 4 g/L, and a same-day disgorged bottle with no dosage. Even after getting the Rosés completely wrong, I still didn't think this would be all that difficult. The hubris of the Warrior is strong within!

Wine number one was silky, full of honeyed dough, bright orange and minerality, and it distinguished itself from the other two by its smoothness and balance. Clearly, this was the original release. The second wine showed a lot of tartness and had a zippy finish. It seemed younger than a traditional 1990, but did flaunt touches of honey and cream – *Cave Privée* was my guess. The last wine seemed the freshest of all, with plenty of tartness, some dry minerality, and a lemon-orange nature that wasn't so much offering, but rather pulsating with raw power. My notebook said this was the freshly disgorged bottle. And once again, I was incorrect three times: the first wine was the freshly disgorged bottle, the second was the original release, and the third was the *Cave Privée*.

That made me zero for three. Twice. It was quite humbling. And frankly, I was embarrassed that I did so

poorly in a tasting I had helped to bring to reality. The fact that no one else got more than one wine right in either flight did make me feel a bit better, I'll admit it. Nonetheless, the entire exercise illustrated just how difficult blind tasting can be and why stats on a piece of paper rarely translate to the tasting or drinking of a wine. While disgorgement dates and dosage identify wine's history, they are merely pieces of a larger puzzle. As all jigsaw users know, individual pieces can only get you so far – you need an understanding of the big picture to truly appreciate the final product.

Wine can offer great lessons in humility – anytime I think I have it all figured out, it becomes apparent just how much I still have to learn. The same goes for winemakers like those standing next to me in the Veuve caves. The pursuit of a deeper understanding of wine constantly offers us opportunities to challenge ourselves and our ideas. We cannot be afraid to put our assumptions to the test. Failing, or, at the very least, being humbled is inevitable, but that must not hold us back. Winemakers without a misstep can create clean and correct wines, but these are too often boring, soul-less ones. Similarly, wine critics who do not challenge themselves to truly understand the evolution of the wines they study will never be able to guide fellow wine-lovers more than superficially. Wines should be tasted at different periods of their life to better understand their evolution – this allows a critic to give forward-thinking advice that has a basis in reality instead of simple guesswork.

Because I can't leave you thinking that I'm completely hapless when it comes to blind tasting, I feel compelled to share that I performed much better in subsequent tastings. I guessed every vintage correctly in blind flights of *Grande Dame* blanc and Rosé across three decades. This restored my confidence, but I remain fully aware that the wines can choose to humble me whenever they want. After all, I'm an eternal student, learning more from my teachers – the vine and the wine – every day.

Cheers,



Brad Baker
The Champagne Warrior

Partnership with CellarTracker!™

The most common feedback that I received after the release of Issue 1 was to “get the content online”. A steady stream of requests for on-line article hosting and a web searchable database continually arrived in my inbox. There was/is a Champagne Warrior website of course, but it functioned as a portal for subscriptions and a few random thoughts more than anything else. The newsletter is the main product I work hard to put out, and the bulk of my time and energy is spent learning about and tasting Champagne and sparkling wines. Enhanced on-line content was always planned, but it wasn’t in place for the launch of Issue 1.

As I began to draw up a plan and timeline for enhanced online content, it struck me that going the do-it-myself route or hiring a great web designer wasn’t going to deliver the end result I was looking for. I’ve always been a believer in sticking to your core and outsourcing or partnering with those who are experts at things outside of your realm of expertise. My vision was to have full, searchable access available for all Champagne Warrior content, and I wanted it to be done in a user-friendly and acceptable way that did more than just bring up a note. I wanted to give users the ability to easily access notes in the way they wanted with minimal effort.

Being a long time [CellarTracker!](#) user, I have always enjoyed how founder Eric Levine has been able to integrate user and professional notes into his industry-leading cellar management software. When it comes to wine, CellarTracker! has become my “wine homepage”. Among the many incredible benefits CellarTracker! provides are: instant view of my cellar contents including value and location, and professional and other user reviews on both wines I own and am interested in. The more I looked at CellarTracker!, the more I realized that there would be no better way to offer Champagne Warrior online content than through CellarTracker!. So, I talked with Eric and quicker than you can say “Vieilles Vignes Francaises,” my dream partnership with CellarTracker! became a reality.

As such, all Champagne Warrior subscribers who are also paid CellarTracker! subscribers have access to the following searchable online content:

- articles
- tasting notes
- issue content (ability to see all content organized by issue, just like the electronic print version)

In addition, all dual subscribers can instantly see Champagne Warrior reviews of wines in their cellar or wines they search for while using the CellarTracker! database. All subscribers of CellarTracker! can view Champagne Warrior numerical ratings, but the review text is only available to Champagne Warrior subscribers.

Now, this brings up the question of cost. After all, you have to subscribe to not only The Champagne Warrior, but also CellarTracker! to access the online content. This can get expensive. A subscription to Champagne Warrior is \$90 per year and CellarTracker! is at least another \$30. It can start to add up, and if I were a subscriber to The Champagne Warrior, I would expect to receive the online content for my \$90.

The one twist to this is that many of my subscribers are already CellarTracker! users (there are over 70,000 of them). I wanted to find a way to offer up the online content, but I didn’t want to “double” charge those who already subscribe to CellarTracker!. As such, I have come up with the following solution/offer:

- Anyone who subscribes to CellarTracker! can subscribe to The Champagne Warrior for \$60/year, which is a discount of \$30 off of the normal price

Why am I doing this? I believe that this makes sense and gives you fair value for your money. That said, I’d love to hear what you have to think, so if you have any thoughts (whether good or bad), feel free to let me know by contacting me at bradbaker@champagnewarrior.com.

Also, if you haven’t seen it yet, please be sure to check out the [beta of the “next generation” CellarTracker!](#).



How Wines Are Evaluated

All wines are judged on the same scale, regardless of origin, price, vintage, or reputation. A \$10 sparkling wine from Canada is held to the same standards as a \$200 tete de cuvée Champagne. Wines are evaluated on how they taste today and on the potential for future improvement (if any); for wines that are expected to change over time, every effort is made to provide a “peak pleasure” drinking window in the tasting note.

Rather than give a single score, a grading range has been chosen for the following reasons:

- There is variation between representative bottles of any wine – multiple bottles of the same wine will not all be identical in taste and aroma profile. While I could certainly nail a particular bottle down to a single point value, attempting to summarize the entire production of a wine using one number is not something that I believe in.
- There is variation by taster: we are all human. Mood, stress, health, environment, tasting order, etc... can all impact the way a wine is interpreted. Even with the best of intentions and tightly controlled conditions, some variation will undoubtedly occur. Giving a score range accounts for this.

The scale used to judge/grade wines is:

97-100	Legendary Wine; An All-Time Great
93-96	Spectacular Wine; A Classic
90-92	World Class Example of Its Type
85-89	Very Good Wine

80-84	Good Wine; Enjoyable
70-79	Acceptable Only in the \$4-\$12 Category
60-69	Poorly Made Wine at Any Price
Below 60	Avoid at All Costs

Wines are tasted in various settings, although private, controlled tastings are preferred. Whenever possible, multiple glasses/bottles of a wine are tested and the wine is evaluated over a period of hours to observe temporal changes. If a wine appears to be “off”, damaged, or unrepresentative, it is not graded or reviewed; instead, if available, a new bottle is evaluated. Every effort is made to taste the wines from a Riedel Restaurant Champagne glass. This glass is used because it performs at a high level and is very affordable (less than \$8 per stem).

The majority of wines reviewed in this newsletter come from personal purchases and, as noted previously, multiple bottles are sampled whenever possible. Other sources for tasting notes include trade tastings, winery tastings, samples from distributors/importers, and private tastings/contributions.

Please read the reviews as well as look at the scores – numbers don’t tell the entire story. An overachieving \$8 wine graded at 79-81 may be much more interesting than an underperforming \$150 bottle given an 87-89. I often look for value when making purchasing decisions and recommendations, so remember to take into account my tone when a \$300 wine is rated at 87-89; it may be tasty, but it isn’t the wisest outlay of cash, in my opinion.

The goal of Champagne Warrior is to give you an honest opinion of different Champagne and sparkling wines produced throughout the world. I hope to give you an idea of what to expect from a wine, and to help guide you in determining where to spend your hard-earned dollars. While I certainly hope you agree with my reviews, I want to provide value in any way I can. Without regard to points, my greatest hope is that the reviews provided will give you a feel for the wine and help you decide whether you wish to pursue it.

I should also mention that I hope no one takes a negative review of a wine they made or like personally. I know that all winemakers put their blood, sweat, and tears into every bottle they produce. Their wines are like their children. It is not my intention to belittle anyone, but I do feel obligated to report what I taste in terms of flavor, reaction, and opinion. Please remember that I bear no grudges and am always happy to sample new releases or new disgorgements from a winery I may not have been happy with in the past. Good wines should be celebrated, but subpar efforts should be pointed out too.

Finally, please do not put any stock in how long a review is for a particular wine. Some great wines have short reviews, while I may wax nostalgic about a mediocre wine. The length of the wine review depends on a lot of things, but wine quality isn’t one of them.













Hey, This Yellow Box Means Something

You will notice some wines whose tasting notes are highlighted in yellow boxes. These wines are not necessarily the highest rated wines in the issue, but those that have impacted me the most; these wines stand out and have that “something special”. They will be excellent examples of a vintage/style/terroir, incredible values, high interest wines, and/or a flat-out kick butt bottle of bubbly.

The Dirty Dozen

(my favorite wines in this issue)

The following wines are my favorites from this issue (Yellow Box Wines). These aren't necessarily the highest rated wines of the issue, but those that have made the greatest impact on me. They are listed below in alphabetical order.

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Philipponnat

2011 Producer of the Year



Charles Philipponnat – the visionary leader

Twenty years ago Philipponnat was known for a single special wine – *Clos de Goisses* – yet even so, it was only recognizable to the biggest of wine geeks. Bottles of this eponymous wine routinely languished on the shelves of many a wine shop. Ten years ago, the quality of the Philipponnat range had improved somewhat, but the wines still didn't sell well without a serious discount. Like it or not, Philipponnat was considered to be nothing but the lucky owner of a very special plot of land.

However, over the last decade a lot has changed in Champagne. Many (perhaps even most) producers have upped their game in both the vineyards and winery, but I think the increase in quality managed by Philipponnat has been downright shocking. Their progress has resulted in wines that excel across their entire range. While they are still probably best known for *Clos des Goisses*, in my opinion, the real value is in the rest of the wines they produce. (Personally, I drink a case or two of the "regular" Philipponnat cuvées for every one bottle of *Clos des Goisses*.)

Innovative and aggressive programs to improve the vineyards, winery, customer relations, and most importantly the wines themselves have delivered incredible value and expression across the range. It is for these reasons that Philipponnat is my producer of the year. Their team has managed to combine a respect for tradition with a zest for constant improvement. Further, Philipponnat has managed to deftly balance appeal to customers seeking evidence of terroir, delicious fruit, and breathtaking minerality. This is a dance few attempt and even fewer do well, but Philipponnat has mastered the steps with grace.

Champagne Warrior Producers of the Year	
2007	Vilmart
2008	Chartogne-Taillet
2009	Bereche
2010	Laherte Frères
2011	Philipponnat

The History of the Estate

The Philipponnat family has owned an estate in Champagne since 1522, when they took up residence and established ownership of vineyards in Aÿ. For two centuries the family was involved in the business of making wine, both still and sparkling. It was in the mid-nineteenth century that the family began to concentrate on the production and sale of sparkling Champagne only, although the Philipponnat brand was still but a glimmer in the family's eye.

It wasn't until 1910 when Auguste and Pierre Philipponnat moved to Mareuil-sur-Aÿ that Philipponnat was officially established as a producer. At this time the brothers were able to take over cellars originally constructed in the eighteenth century plus existing winemaking facilities, and, in 1935, they made one of the best regional purchases ever – that of the Clos des Goisses vineyard. This vineyard had been well-regarded since the beginning of the previous century, but the Philipponnat family was the first to commercialize and promote its unique expression of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.



A wine made by the previous owners of what is today Philipponnat

The winery was hard hit by the Second World War, when the cellars in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ were almost completely raided. Along with the missing bottles was lost the historical record of winemaking practices prior to 1945, but the decimation of the winery compelled the remaining family members to create even better Champagne than their predecessors. For the next three decades, the family improved the entire range of wines. Sadly, even as the brand name grew, the family fractured, largely over conflicting ideas about who would do what. The internal division and success of the brand made it an attractive target, and Albert Gosset (at the time running his own family Champagne business) purchased the winery in 1980, ending centuries of family ownership. In 1987, Gosset sold the brand to the Globe group, who placed Philipponnat under the Marie-Brizard umbrella as the pillar of their Champagne portfolio.

From 1980 through 2000, times grew increasingly difficult at Philipponnat, the divorce from the family having left the house without adequate supervision or affection. This once-rising producer driven by family passion became just a name on a bottle. The brand was often and incorrectly assumed to be associated with Philipponnats elsewhere in the Champagne world: Auguste's son René Philipponnat was the Chef de Caves at Moët from 1949-1989 and René's son Charles Philipponnat was an executive at Moët.

Finally, in 1996, with the company's debt and labor costs rising, Bruno Paillard managed to purchase Philipponnat through his Boizel Chanoine Champagne (BCC) Group. The BCC Group owns Philipponnat today, and it has been under their leadership that things really turned around.

An Amazing Rise to the Top

There wasn't any reason to expect much from Philipponnat after the BCC Group took over, although it was assumed that *Clos des Goisses* would be marketed better and might even finally receive the respect it deserved. The winery was outdated and rundown, and though the vineyard locations were good, outside of Clos des Goisses, none were considered to be truly special.

The BCC Group could and did provide the funding for a complete refresh in terms of people and facilities, but reinvigoration of the soul required the right leader. In 2000 that leader was found in Charles Philipponnat, sixteenth generation of the Champagne family, when he agreed to leave Moët. Charles was excited to come back "home" to run the family brand, and he certainly wasn't going to be happy with anything but 110% effort in creation of wine that would bear his name. His first tasks were to improve the winery facilities and the vineyards. Portions of several vineyards, including Clos des Goisses, were uprooted and replanted, as it was decided that an investment in the long term quality was more desirable than continued production of substandard fruit. By 2004, a new winery was erected in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ which allowed Philipponnat to enter the modern age of

Champagne-making. More consistent, cleaner, and more defined wines have been produced ever since.

Charles also made the conscious decision not to release wines just to churn out product. By focusing on increasing the quality rather than the quantity of bottlings, Charles inched Philipponnat towards improvement. He focused on the Pinot Noir wines since the grape comprised a majority of the estate's best holdings. Highlighting the house's strengths (rather than trying to twist its components into something it wasn't cut out for) made a huge difference and the walk towards improvement became a run. Ask anybody to compare the Philipponnat wines from ten or fifteen years ago to those produced now and the difference will be unmistakable – even in the *Clos des Goisses*.



Charles Philipponnat tastes through a range of wines

The Vineyards

Today, Philipponnat owns 20 ha of vineyards spread throughout the villages of Avenay, Aÿ, Mareuil-sur-Aÿ and Mutigny. Pinot Noir is planted in the majority of the vineyards, all of which make up approximately 30% of the house's needs. Purchased grapes come from all over, with most Pinot Noir coming from Riceys in the Aube and Mailly. Purchased Chardonnay comes from the Côte des Blancs villages of Cramant, Cuis, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, Oger and Vertus. Of the total 20 ha, 11 are in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, including the famed Clos des Goisses vineyard, which is 5.5 ha in size. This vineyard sits on a hillside facing south with an extremely steep slope that approaches 45° in some locations. The 5.5 ha are

subdivided into fourteen parcels – 3.5 ha of Pinot Noir and 2.0 ha of Chardonnay. These special holdings are looked after by chief viticulturist Claude Laurent who has worked his way up from a simple vineyard worker, then tractor driver, and now head of all vinegrowing and harvesting. Claude will celebrate thirty years with Philipponnat in 2013.



One of the fourteen parcels in the Clos des Goisses

Philipponnat follows *lutte raisonnée*, literally translated as “reasoned struggle”, which in practical terms means “reasoned viticulture”. This approach allows them to be natural whenever possible, but does not dictate that they forgo entirely more traditional solutions to fight against pests, weeds, and fungus. However, applications such as pesticides and herbicides are only used as a last resort. Only organic fertilizers are allowed, and, outside of the occasional use of chemicals during the worst of times, farming has followed the organic model for the past decade. Plowing of vineyard soils has also resumed where possible (this is often slope-dependent).

Much More Than Clos des Goisses

Thierry Garnier is the head of Philipponnat cellars and winemaking. In 2006 he became only the fifth Chef de Caves at Philipponnat, following in the footsteps of Louis Boland, Achille Souply, Armand Husson and Norbert Thiébert. Charles Philipponnat also lends his guidance and expertise to the production. Together the two have created a very special portfolio of wines going far beyond *Clos des Goisses*.

Winemaking today is eons away from where it once was. Previously, Champagne-making involved dumping wines into vats and blending both first and second pressings; today, everything is kept separate and each wine is evaluated individually. Only the first pressing cuvée is used and the wines go into either steel tanks or oak barrels of various ages. A majority of wines undergo malolactic fermentation, but almost never do the wines get put into oak. Reserve wines are now kept in large oak foudres that function like a pseudo-solera, or perpetual blend. The

amount of reserve wine taken out each year is replenished by new reserve wines from the current harvest.

Vintage cuvées, in general, see a little more oak aging, less malolactic fermentation, and a slightly lower dosage than do the non-vintage blends (the exception is the *Sec Millésime Sublime Réserve*). Because the upper end of the range utilizes the best grapes from the best sites, the winemaking team feels that these grapes benefit from time in oak and suppression of malolactic fermentation. These grapes also tend to be a bit riper, balancing more easily with a lower dosage than do the grapes used in the non-vintage wines. Additionally, all of the vintage wines are still riddled by hand.

Nothing is off-limits in Philipponnat cellars, no matter how crazy it may sound at first blush – the only requirement is that whatever is done makes the wine tastes good. A great example of this spontaneous attitude is their *Millésime Sublime Réserve*. Shortly after Charles joined the company, he found thousands of bottles of the 1991 *Philipponnat Grand Blanc* resting in the cellars, and it tasted a bit tired. Uncomfortable with selling these bottles as-is, he had an idea: after a little tweaking and a Sec-level dosage (~30 g/L), he created a fresh, zesty, delicious and sweet Champagne. Few houses were introducing new sweet wines at that time and most producers weren’t having much success in the sweet Champagne market at all, so this wasn’t an obvious business decision, but it worked. The 1991 was followed by vintages again in 1995, 1996, 2000, and 2002. All versions were 100% Chardonnay except the 2000, which used the *Réserve Millésimée* as a base instead.



The Philipponnat wines

Philipponnat Style

The Philipponnat style is one of exquisitely balanced contrasts – bright fruit and firm minerality, sensual femininity and structured masculinity, intense Pinot Noir and fresh Chardonnay. Their signature is demonstrated across the entire range, but it is most easily perceived in the non-vintage wines and the “1522” series. Philipponnat relies heavily on Pinot Noir from the

villages of Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Ay, locations which are known for their power and breadth of fruit; however, Philipponnat's vines express minerality over all else. The chalky soils, so famous for Chardonnay in the Côte des Blancs, here create exactly what Philipponnat desires in their Pinot Noir.

Philipponnat is proud of their open-book policy in winemaking. They are willing to play with as many variables as they can (steel, oak, malolactic fermentation, aging, dosage, etc...), disregarding any set path toward pre-defined results. Radical practices such as changing the dosage of a wine mid-release are not unheard of, if they feel the wine needs adjusting. What's more, they even tell you what they have done on the back label – there are no secrets here.

One of my favorite examples of Philipponnat's approach is in the names of their non-vintage Rosé and the standard vintage wine. Both have what appears to be an extra "e" in the title: *Réserve Rosée* and *Réserve Millésimée*. When I asked about the spelling mistakes, I was told that their goal is to offer elegance and femininity in the Champagne experience – the extra "e" is the correct feminine version of the words Rosé and Millésime.



The "1522" wines of Philipponnat

The True Prestige Wine of Philipponnat

While *Clos des Goisses* may get the most press and demand the highest price, it isn't the true tête de cuvée of the house. *Clos des Goisses* is its own animal, a specific and beautiful expression of terroir, and it would be the same with or without Philipponnat. To understand the house itself, the "1522" wines are the answer. These two wines (a blanc and Rosé) are made from the best Pinot Noir grapes that Philipponnat owns and the best Chardonnay grapes that they source.

The "1522" label depicts the Aÿ village church from the sixteenth century. Philipponnat chose this image with a purpose – to remind themselves of their humble beginnings and of that which made it all possible: Pinot Noir from this village from that century. Originally,

"1522" was released as a non-vintage wine based on the 1996 harvest, but starting with the 2000 harvest it became a vintage wine, and to my mind, it excels in this format. Freshness, intensity, and minerality characterize the "1522" wines, which have sharpened the house style and deliver it to your taste buds with precision and grace. They are nothing like *Clos des Goisses*, but just as tasty, and a relative bargain, price-wise. Still largely unknown, they represent one of the best values in Champagne.

Looking into the Future

The team at Philipponnat doesn't plan on slowing down anytime soon. In fact, many of the changes made almost a decade ago are still in progress (i.e., use of the new winery). Still more changes will become apparent only after the wines from 2004 and after hit the shelves, most especially the "1522" wines and *Clos des Goisses* from this new era.

Philipponnat continues to tweak their line-up, enjoying the opportunity to present the best wines possible. The *Réserve Millésime* had previously been a blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, but starting in 2007 the recipe will change: it will be re-launched as a 100% Pinot Noir *Blanc de Noirs Millésime*. The intent is to showcase their skill with Pinot Noir, and to keep the blended *Réserve Millésime* from being overshadowed by the superior "1522". The 2005 release of the *Réserve Millésime* will be the final one before the *Blanc de Noirs Millésime* takes over. However, special targeted releases (2004 and 2006) of the *Réserve Millésime* are around and may continue to be seen here and there. Philipponnat sold the 2004 version straight to airlines for use in lounges and upper class cabins, and the 2006 *Réserve Millésime* was released only in Italy and under the special, one-time label *Cuvée Moon*.

Philipponnat has wrestled with the idea of making available a small amount of wine made from each of the fourteen parcels that make up the *Clos des Goisses* vineyard. Currently bottles made from each of these parcels are resting in the cellars, but a decision has not yet been made concerning whether they will be kept in-house, used for special events, or released in a very small public offering. Imagine the fun you could have tasting the final blend of *Clos des Goisses* alongside each of its components! Outside of the potential for single-parcel bottlings, Philipponnat is preparing for the release of the 2003 *Clos des Goisses* (and the 2004-2011 vintages), although the next *Clos des Goisses Justé Rosé* will not be out until the 2005 vintage.

Philipponnat was one of the first producers to put disgorgement dates on their bottles in 1996, and they continue to provide as much information on the back labels as possible. Today they give information on dosage, grape varieties, and other winemaking techniques, space provided (some countries require health statements that excludes some or all of the detail that is provided on bottles in France). Philipponnat continues to ask for consumer feedback regarding the information desired by

their customers – be it written on the label or downloaded from the internet via a code scan.

I see nothing but a bright future ahead for Charles Philipponnat and his team. The wines continue to shine more brightly each year, and the entry-level non-vintage *Royal Réserve* and *Réserve Rosée* are two of the best buys available. The below-the-radar *Millésime Sublime Réserve* is one of the best sweet Champagnes on the market, too. I've already said enough about the "1522" wines and why you should be drinking them instead of reading this article, and *Clos des Goisses* stands on its own as one of the most unique wines in all of Champagne. If you are looking for a wine that shows finesse, fruit, intensity, and a mineral-led Pinot Noir, then pick up a bottle of Philipponnat – you will not be disappointed.

The Philipponnat Wine Range

- **NV Royal Réserve** is around 30% Chardonnay, 65% Pinot Noir, and 5% Pinot Meunier that is mostly fermented in steel and then usually goes through malolactic fermentation (although a small amount is fermented in oak and does not undergo malolactic fermentation). Reserve wines are stored in an oak "solera"-type system and typically make up 25-40% of the blend. Dosage is normally 8 g/L.
- **NV Royal Réserve Non Dosé** is identical to the *Royal Réserve*, but with at least one additional year of aging on the lees. No dosage is added.
- **NV Réserve Rosée** has a base identical to the *Royal Réserve*, but it is blended with a red wine that is made by macerating Pinot Noir grapes for 12-14 days. This red wine addition changes the final blend composition to 20-25% Chardonnay, 70-75% Pinot Noir, and 4-5% Pinot Meunier. Dosage is approximately 9 g/L.
- **Réserve Millésimée** is normally 30% Chardonnay from the Côte des Blancs and 70% Pinot Noir from Aÿ and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ. The wine is made mostly in steel, although a small portion may be fermented in oak. A majority of the blend sees malolactic fermentation, and dosage is 4-5 g/L.
- **Millésime Grand Blanc** is pure Chardonnay, with 15% coming from the Clos des Goisses vineyard, 15% from Trépail and 70% from the Côte des Blancs (Cramant, Cuis, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, and Vertus are the most common villages). A majority of the wine is made in steel and sees malolactic fermentation, although some oak and suppression of malolactic fermentation is also allowed. Dosage has recently decreased to the 5-6 g/L range.
- **Millésime Sublime Réserve** is a late-released, Sec-level-dosed (normally 30 g/L) version of either the *Millésime Grand Blanc* or *Réserve Millésimée*, depending on the vintage.
- **Millésime "1522"** is 40% Chardonnay from the Côte des Blancs (Cramant, Oger, and Le Mesnil-sur-Oger can all be used) and 60% Pinot Noir normally from Aÿ, although Mailly has also been used. The wine is mostly made in steel and sees malolactic fermentation, but a portion of the blend always sees oak and has malolactic fermentation withheld. Dosage is 4-5 g/L.
- **Millésime "1522" Rosé** is very close in makeup to the white "1522". The blend begins as approximately 40% Chardonnay from the Côte des Blancs and 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ. To this blend, 5% Pinot Noir red wine from Clos des Goisses in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ is added. The wine sees a mix of steel and oak fermentation plus both malolactic fermentation allowed and suppressed. Dosage is 4-5 g/L.
- **Millésime Clos des Goisses** hails from the famed 5.5ha vineyard in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ. It is 30-50% Chardonnay and 50-70% Pinot Noir with a mix of wines made in steel and oak, but always without malolactic fermentation. Dosage is 4-5 g/L and production is 5,000 – 30,000 bottles a year.
- **Millésime Clos des Goisses Justé Rosé** debuted with the 1999 vintage and is almost identical to the blanc Clos des Goisses, but with approximately 10% of red wine from the Clos des Goisses vineyard blended in. Production is very limited and has been one to two thousand bottles per vintage so far.
- **Le Caveau du Trésor** is the name for Philipponnat's library releases. This is a collection of wines dating back to the 1940s that are disgorged upon demand and released after extending aging in the Philipponnat cellars. Currently the Caveau du Trésor collection has included *Clos des Goisses*, *Millésimée Grand Blanc*, and *Réserve Millésime*, but may be expanded to include other wines (like the 1522 duo) in the future.

Afterword - A Note of Thanks



I would like to extend a very special thanks to Vianney Gravereaux who, until early this year, was the Export Director for Philipponnat. When I started to explore Champagne beyond just the bottle and glass, Vianney was one of the first to grasp my passion and make sure the doors to Philipponnat were always open. He was also happy to offer help, advice, and a willingness to talk about anything under the sun. It didn't matter to him that I was a crazy unknown American; he always made time for me and warmly welcomed me to the estate. I know his work ethic, warm personality, and eagerness to please will be missed not only at Philipponnat, but throughout Champagne. There is no doubt in my mind that part of the increasing recognition garnered by Philipponnat is due to his work there. Vianney has moved on to lead the export department of Burgundy's stalwart Louis Jadot, and I wish him the best – he will be greatly missed in Champagne, although I know Jadot Burgundy is all the better for it. Viannay – I owe you a tremendous amount and you helped me more than you know. Keep up the great work and keep fighting the good fight.

Philipponnat Tasting Notes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	89-91	89-91	13
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	86-89	86-89	13
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15

2000 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

The 1522 wines are the epitome of Philipponnat's house style. Named to commemorate the date that the Philipponnat family first purchased vineyards in Champagne, the grapes in this cuvée come from various Grand Cru vineyards that the house either owns or sources from. This was previously a non-vintage blend, but beginning with 2000 it bears a vintage date. I'm glad that it does - the 1522 is a very nice wine.

This has a big and bold nose full of spicy, meaty citrus and red pears. The palate steps back, revealing rather elegant flavors of clean citrus and a stunning dose of minerality.

(40% Chardonnay from Oger, 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ; Disgorged February 2006; 4 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

2002 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"

Rating	Potential
89-91	89-91

The 1522 cuvée from Philipponnat does not get nearly the respect it deserves. I have loved this wine since it started as a non-vintage entity, and in my opinion, it is the best representation of the Philipponnat house style. The nose is full of mineral, juicy apple, and firm citrus. Clean citrus and mineral explode on the palate and develop into juicy, yeasty pear and a long, lingering, citrus finish. This is exceptional now, but will reward those who cellar it for another 5-10 years.

(40% Chardonnay from Oger, 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ; 60% fermented in stainless steel, 40% fermented in oak; Disgorged September 2008; 5 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

2003 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"

Rating	Potential
86-89	86-89

This wine is open on both the nose and palate. Peachy citrus aromas join in with juicy pear, mineral-filled citrus, and crusty bread flavors to make for an enjoyable and fairly well-structured wine. A hint of red berry and smoke comes out on the finish and wraps the wine up into a very tidy package. Perfect for drinking now or anytime over the next three to eight years.

(40% Chardonnay from Oger, 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ and Mailly; 60% fermented in stainless steel, 40% fermented in oak; Disgorged March 2011; 4 g/L dosage; \$70-90 US)

2000 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé

Rating	Potential
89-91	89-91

While *Clos des Goisses* is clearly the star of the Philipponnat house, it isn't the best example of the producer's style. After all, the Clos is so uniquely special that the main job of the winemaker is to not mess up what the earth has given him. Here, blending is key and the true test of winemaker magic.

As with the 2000 vintage of the 1522 Brut, this version shows meaty notes on the nose, but enough strawberries and minerals join in to keep the party from falling flat. The palate shows fresh strawberry-citrus juice, chalky mineral, and some barely-there biscuit notes. A long, clean red citrus and mineral finish has me reaching for another glass. This is a very good wine and an excellent effort for the vintage.

(35% Chardonnay, 65% Pinot Noir; Grand Cru; 6-7% red wine added to the white Cuvée 1522; Disgorged August 2006; 4 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

2002 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé

Rating	Potential
90-92	90-92

A bargain of a wine, this opens with bright cream, mineral and soft red berry after which a little bit of cinnamon sneaks in. This is drinking well straight from the bottle - a go-to Rosé that balances richness, biscuit, and citrus zest like no other producer can.

(40% Chardonnay from Oger, 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ with 7-8% red wine from Aÿ addition; Mix of stainless steel and oak fermentation; Disgorged February 2008; 4 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

2003 Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Very open and somewhat overbearing right now, this wine displays hard biscuit flavor and lots of cherry on the palate. Some spice comes out with warmth, at which point this takes on a subtle cherry liqueur note. Overall the wine follows the general trend of the 2003 vintage: drinking well today, it is a bit one-dimensional. I say save the 2002 for later and drink this now. It is tasty stuff.

(40% Chardonnay from Oger, 60% Pinot Noir from Aÿ and Mailly with 7-8% red wine from Aÿ addition; Mix of stainless steel and oak fermentation; Disgorged July 2009; 4 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

2005 Philipponnat Grand Blanc

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Creamy lemon aromas are energetic and just plain fun. This is a top-notch 2005 that delivers on the early promise of the vintage to be a bright, happy, simple and to-the-point Chardonnay vintage. While this doesn't have great complexity, it shows great citrus character and is willing to give all it's got. This wine is impossible not to like and a great choice for a 2005.

(100% Chardonnay; 70% from the Côte de Blancs, 15% from Trepail, 15% from Clos des Goisses in Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; All stainless steel fermentation and aging; Disgorged late 2011; 5 g/L dosage; \$55-75 US)

NV Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Very fragrant on the nose, this wine's strawberry and raspberry are loud and proud. This is very fresh and clearly berry-led, although it has a touch of biscuit dough and a gripping finish highlighted by minerality. In my book, this is one of the best values on the market and it even handles bottle age well. Leave this alone for five to eight years and it will be every bit as good as it is today.

(20% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; 5% Pinot Meunier with 7-8% Pinot Noir still red wine addition; 2007 base vintage with 24% reserve wines; All wines fermented in stainless steel; Reserve wines aged in an oak solera and some stainless steel; Disgorged late 2011; 9 g/L dosage; \$40-55 US)

NV Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Fresh, soft orange cream characterizes yet another winning example of this top-notch basic non-vintage cuvée. Hints of crisp apple, bread dough, bitter minerality, and clean citrus all give this wine ample body and character. Drink it now for a bit of bite or let it sit for a few years and it will mellow.

(30% Chardonnay, 65% Pinot Noir; 5% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 26% reserve wines; All wines fermented in stainless steel; Reserve wines aged in an oak solera and some stainless steel; Disgorged late 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$35-50 US)

Champagne Needs More Wines Like This!

Rating

Potential

90-92

90-92

2002 Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec

A fascinating and delicious wine, this is the rare example of a top-notch, sweeter-styled Champagne. Peach and pear show wonderfully on the nose and lead into a palate marked by bright lemon, bread dough, and sizzling acidity. In addition, honey, toast and apricot accompany a wonderfully clean mineral aspect. Despite the fairly high dosage (30 g/L), this wine shows exceptional balance and impressive aging capacity. And while sweeter, it isn't a wine for dessert. Instead it is something to match with foie gras, buttery pastries, or creamy shellfish.

(100% Chardonnay; 70% from the Côte de Blancs, Trepail, and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; All stainless steel fermentation and aging; Disgorged July 2009; 30 g/L dosage; \$55-75 US)



Charles Philipponnat and two of his babies

Huré Frères

Lude's Rising Star

The landscape of Ludes is dominated by warehouses and winery space associated with Canard Duchêne, but it is also known for an assembly of talented small producers who make high quality, well-priced wines. Ployez-Jacquemart and Bereche are nearby, but there is another producer that should be mentioned in the same breath – Huré Frères. Located down a narrow alley in the heart of Ludes sits this gem of a winery which is moving full force into the future with better and better wines..



The Family History

Huré Frères was founded by the wife and husband team of Jeanne and Georges Huré in 1960. I mention Jeanne first because entering the Champagne business was actually her idea. Georges wasn't exactly thrilled to purchase a vineyard to make Champagne, especially since it had been agreed that he would be the winemaker, but he eventually gave in and they created the Georges Huré label (at least he got to name it!). The entire family, including their three sons, was involved in the business, although Jeanne kept her primary job as a nurse.

In 1971 Georges handed control of the winery over to his three sons Jean Marie, Marc, and Raoul, at which point the name changed to Huré Frères (which means "the Huré brothers"). Initially, Raoul and Marc handled the winemaking and vine tending while Jean-Marie

performed administrative duties. Over time, Raoul took on more of a leadership position and he became instrumental in acquiring additional vineyards. The grapes the family harvested were both used in their own wines and sold to négociants.

François Huré

In 2008, Raoul's son François took over the winery and today, with assistance from the family, he remains in charge. But it wasn't always a sure thing that François would take over – as a young man he had pondered a different calling outside of Champagne. François left home in 1996 to study biochemistry. Then in 1998, he went to university in Dijon, where he graduated with a degree in Oenology. Having fallen in love with the wines and terroir of Burgundy, he was reluctant to return to Champagne. Instead, he began to work with Jean Pierre Fleury and developed an intense interest in how a grape grower's actions can affect the land, vines, as well as the wine. It was here that he became fascinated by bio-dynamics and thinking outside of the traditional famer "box". After his term with Jean Pierre Fleury he worked with the Hospice d'Beaune.

Still enjoying his freedom and worldly education, he next flew to Australia where he was employed by James Halliday at Coldstream Hills. After a brief stint there, he moved on to work with the Chapoutiers at their global wine estates in Australia and the Rhone Valley. Still not done travelling, he made it to Pegasus Bay in New Zealand shortly after the year 2000. Finally, after five years of literally traversing the globe, he came home in 2003 to help the family – at first part time and then full time by 2005. Clearly, his world travels not only broadened his horizons, but they gave him exciting ideas about what could be done at home in Champagne.



François Huré – the young, passionate winemaker

His time in Burgundy and New Zealand had the greatest influence on François. From Burgundy he learned the value of understanding the individuality of each plot in a vineyard, and he garnered deep respect for the tradition behind winemaking and farming. In the new world of Australia, he was encouraged to pursue radical concepts in winemaking. Down Under, rules are not followed simply for tradition's sake – winemakers try all sorts of new things without worrying about what others did before. It is a combination of these approaches that François applies now in Champagne.

The Vineyards

The Huré family owns 10 ha of land divided among the villages of Ludes, Villedommange, Brouillet, Serzy, Prin, and Vavray (in and around both Vavray-le-Petit and Vavray-le-Grand). These 10 ha are themselves divided between the descendants of the three brothers, so the families of Jean Marie and Marc sell their grapes back to François at the winery. This division means Huré Frères is classified as a négociant, yet it keeps the family together. Without this arrangement, the families would likely have produced three separate lines and the Huré Frères wines would never have existed.

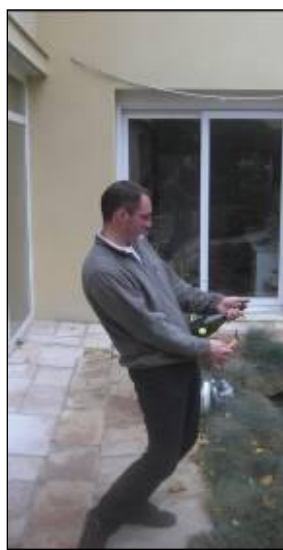
The négociant classification has had another positive effect on the winery as it has allowed them to buy grapes from vineyards that meet or exceed their quality standards. Currently, they buy in 1.5 ha of Chardonnay from Rilly-la-Montagne and Villers-Marmery that François feels are as good as anything he grows and harvests. He says it would be a shame to turn down grapes of this quality simply because they aren't grown

on his land. Additionally, the family still sells some of their grapes to other negociants, including Alfred Gratien.

The biggest change François has made since returning to the family business is to emphasize care for the land and vines. In 2004 they started to farm more naturally and in 2006 they began to eliminate the use of herbicides – today sprays are used only very sparingly. Bio-dynamic methods are practiced, but not exclusively. Like many of the top vine growers in Champagne, the overall goal is to be as natural as possible within reason. François wants to avoid focusing too much on any one specific methodology or practice, since growing grapes and making wine has so many variables. For instance, in 2011 François really focused on reducing his yields, but he feels now that the wines were not the better for it – in fact, he believes the wines would have been improved had the yields been higher.

Winemaking Practices

The winery is also in the midst of a mini-revolution. Gone are the days when all of the wines were handled in the same way. Today, Huré Frères uses every tool at their disposal to bring out each wine's potential, and they challenge themselves to understand which wines respond best to different techniques. Steel tanks, large oak foudres, and small oak barrels have all been part of the repertoire since 2007. The decision to use malolactic fermentation is made on a case by case basis. Natural yeasts are used for the wines that are fermented in oak and no wines see battonage, fining, or filtering, and all undergo natural cold stabilization.



François Huré disgorging a bottle of Terre Natale

The Wines



François Huré samples les vins clairs from barrel

Huré Frères produces between 85,000 and 90,000 bottles of six different wines each year. The style is one of balance and fresh fruit – apple, pear, and peach – although more recent releases have introduced minerality and an interesting accent of baking spice in many of the wines. The entire range is solid, with the *L'insouciance Rosé* being my favorite of the non-vintage choices. Overall, I find *L'Instantanée* and *Terre Natale* to be the most interesting wines and my personal favorites of the house.

L'Instantanée is created every year as a portrait painted by the house vineyards. It is always well made and a beautifully balanced blend that is very close to being equal parts Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier. *Terre Natale* was first launched in 1982 as the prestige cuvée of the house. Production is quite limited at 3,000 or fewer bottles per vintage. This wine sees ten or more years on the lees and comes from a blend of the best Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier that the family has in Ludes. It is only made in select vintages, harvest-dependent. The current vintage is 1999, and future releases are planned for the 2000, 2002, and 2008 harvests. Even with the long time spent on the lees, this is a wine that demands time in the cellar and can be hard to understand in its youth. I recommend giving a bottle of *Terre Natale* at least five to ten years of cellaring after release – the 1983 is just now reaching its peak.

A note about the 2011 vintage: François isn't overly excited about the harvest, and he readily admits he would do things a bit differently if he had the chance. He regrets being so restrictive on the yields and thinks the timing of picking for some vineyards was less than ideal. Nonetheless, Chardonnay did the best in his eyes, and Pinot Noir picked at the end of the harvest is also quite solid. Pinot Meunier was the most challenging for him.

Looking Toward the Future

François took over complete control less than four years ago, and yet one can already see the difference he is

making. The latest wines have more depth, precision, and expression than those of previous years. There is an extra spark and brightness that illuminates the potential of future wines, as illustrated by two new wines made in 2009 to be released in the coming years. He has code-named one the "*Lazy Winemaker*" – for this wine his goal is to showcase the best of Ludes' terroir with minimal intervention and a traditional winemaking approach. This 50/50 blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir is fermented and aged in oak barrels without interference of malolactic fermentation (if it happens, it happens). Early sampling of this wine is very exciting: there is bright, zesty fruit that is matching the oak step for step. A second wine to look for is a perpetual blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier that dates back to 1982. It is currently held in a large oak foudre and may be released in bottle as early as 2013. This wine (which has yet to be named) is quite different from the rest of the Huré Frères range with its rich and spicy notes, but it possesses great fruit and complexity. I cannot wait for both of these wines to hit the market in their final release format.

Huré Frères is definitely a winery to watch. Spend some time tasting the latest offerings and your interest will be piqued – it is really good fizz. Moreover, if you ever get the chance to chat with François and taste his future wines, you will be bowled over not only by his passion, dedication, and friendly nature, but by the quality of his upcoming releases. I highly recommend you give the wines a try and watch them over time.



Contact Information

Huré Frères

2, impasse Carnot

51500 Ludes, France

Phone: +33 (0)3 26 61 11 20

Email: hure-freres@wanadoo.fr

www.champagne-hure-freres.com

Visiting Hours Monday – Saturday, 9:00am – 12:00pm
and 2:00pm – 6:00pm

Wine Range

- **NV L'Invitation Brut Réserve** is 15% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir and 50% Pinot Meunier from the villages of Brouillet, Ludes, Serzy, Vavray, and Villedommange with 25-40% reserve wines going back to the 1980s; dosage is 9 g/L
- **NV L'Insouciance Rosé** consists of 18% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot noir, and 42% Pinot Meunier entirely or mainly from Ludes; reserve wines make up 30% of the blend and approximately 7-10% of Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier red wine is added and the dosage is 8 g/L
- **NV Extra Brut Réserve** is 15% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot noir, and 45% Pinot Meunier with 30% reserve wines; grapes come primarily from the villages of Brouillet, Ludes, Prin, Serzy, Vavray, and Villedommange; 30% reserve wines are used and dosage is 8 g/L
- **Vintaged L'Inattendue Blanc de Blancs** is 100% Chardonnay from a mix of Ludes, Rilly-la-Montagne, and Vavray; dosage is 6-7 g/L.
- **Vintaged L'Instantanée Brut Sélection** is 35% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 30% Pinot Meunier from Brouillet, Ludes, Rilly-la-Montagne, and Villedommange; dosage is 6-8 g/L.
- **Vintaged Terre Natale** is 40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 25% Pinot Meunier from Ludes; it is normally ten years old before release and dosed as an Extra Brut; production is normally less than 3,000 bottles.
- **Various other cuvées** are under experimentation by the Huré family. Different barrel sizes, mixing different ratios of steel/oak storage, malolactic/no malolactic fermentation, various villages, grape varieties, and blending of vintages are all possible. We'll just have to wait and see what final wines they create.

Huré Frères Tasting Notes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2009	Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"	Vintage Blend	NR	NR	20
NV	Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base	NV Blend	85-87	85+	20
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base	NV Blend	83-85	84-86	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
2004	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	21
2005	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	21
1983	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	22
1996	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	85-87	87+	22
1999	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	83-85	85+	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villedommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24

2009 Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

An experimental cuvée, this wine's name has not yet been finalized. The idea behind it is to express the terroir of Ludes with minimal intervention, hence the working title, "Lazy Winemaker". The nose is rich and intense, with oak quite apparent. However, the strength of the fruit is equal to that the wood, and potential for greatness is there. Plenty of citrus and zesty minerality will only add finesse as the wine ages. Too young to score right now, this is a wine to watch for.

(50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir; Ludes; Oak; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2012 - à la volée; No dosage; Test/Experimental wine)

NV Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85+

Another experimental wine from François Huré, this is a blend of every vintage between 1982 and 2009 that is blended and aged in a large oak foudre. If all goes well, the final wine should be released sometime in 2013. On the palate this shows plenty of rich, spicy bread dough along with pear and crusty French bread. This is well made, complex, interesting and quite different from the rest of the Huré range. Having observed its potential, I cannot wait for its release.

(20% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier; 2009 base wine in a blend of wines from 1982-2009; Aged in oak foudre; Disgorged early 2012 as a test; To be released in 2013)

2005 Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

Quite full-bodied when compared to the rest of the range, this shows floral peach, baked pear, and a few drops of honey. Like many wines from the 2005 vintage this begins with bright fruit, but then thins out to a stutter at the finish. Not terrible, but not entirely successful either.

(100% Chardonnay; Ludes and Rilly-la-Montagne; Disgorged late 2011; 6 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

NV Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Fresh pears and peaches rule the nose. A touch of spice joins on the palate along with coarse orange, peel and all. At the start of the finish there is a squirt of bright, creamy citrus. This has nice acidity and just enough richness to make it something you can serve both with and without food.

(15% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 30% reserve wines; Disgorged mid 2011; 9 g/L dosage; \$35-45 US)

NV Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
83-85	84-86

Very fresh and inviting on the nose, where pear and apple greet you gleefully. Peach flavors coat the mouth and leave the palate tingling with a zesty finish. While not a spectacular wine, this is very solid and is well priced - especially when purchased at the domaine.

(15% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2008 base vintage with 30% reserve wines; Disgorged early 2012; 9 g/L dosage; \$35-45 US)

NV Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Softer in style, this is characterized by berry aroma on the nose and yeasty raspberry notes on the palate. With time, cream and strawberry also enter the picture. Quite fruit-driven and showing a dry, unsweetened, hard candy character, this is the top of the Huré non-vintage range and a wine I can easily recommend.

(20% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier with 8% Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier red wine addition; 2008 base vintage with 30% reserve wines; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

2004 Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-88

The vision behind *L'instatanée* is to showcase a picture of the vintage rather than any particular quality, terroir, or style, and it has been made every year since 1985. The 2005 edition starts off with rich honey and pear that slowly merges into bright apple and lively acidity. This is tasty right now and will only get better with time.

(1/3 each Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier; Disgorged mid 2011; 7 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

2005 Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Flavors of peach, apple, and cream become quite rich towards the back of the palate and on the finish. This wine flaunts the 2005 vintage character with its ready-to-go attitude. There is a hint of earthiness from the Pinot Meunier, but nothing distracting. All in all, this is well made, tasty, easy to enjoy, and even easier to match with food since it goes with just about anything.

(1/3 each Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier; Disgorged mid 2011; 7 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

NV Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

Dry citrus and pear aromas slowly lead into a creamy, pear-flavored palate that fills the mouth with dusty, fruity flavors. Some toasted, crusty bread and peach also appear after a time, alongside a subtle salinity. Well made, tasty, and sure to please fans of low dosage wines.

(15% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2006 base vintage with 30% reserve wines; Disgorged mid 2011; 3 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

NV Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Hints of saline mark both the nose and palate and set the pace for a very clean and focused wine with a slight mineral bend. Overall, I find this to be a little soft and subdued compared to the rest of the range, but those looking for precision and clarity will be fans. This is the same wine as the non-vintage *Brut Réserve L'invitation* given less dosage and an extra year of aging on the lees.

(15% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 30% reserve wines; Disgorged early 2012; 3 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

The Perfect Example of Why You Should Cellar Terre Natale

1983 Huré Frères Terre Natale

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Only the second vintage made of this cuvée (the first was in 1982), this is more youthful than I ever would have guessed. Fresh, fruity pear aromas are followed willingly by rich, slightly nutty, bitter, zesty citrus flavors on the palate. Time has treated this wine very well as it is seamlessly integrated and balanced.

(40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 5% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Disgorged 2012 - à la volée; No dosage; \$100-120 US)

1996 Huré Frères Terre Natale

Rating	Potential
85-87	87+

Ripe pears burst forth on the nose, almost coming across as candied. Toasty aromas on the nose may lead you to believe this is more mature than it is, but the palate will convince you otherwise, revealing dough, tart, ripe citrus, minerals, and a wonderful, zesty pear finish. My advice is to keep cellaring this (if you are lucky enough to have a bottle).

(40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 5% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Disgorged 2012 - à la volée; No dosage; \$60-80 US)

1999 Huré Frères Terre Natale

Rating	Potential
83-85	85+

Only made in the best vintages, *Terre Natale* is the tête de cuvée of the Huré family. At the moment, I find this bottle in need of more time to regain its balance – right now too much richness is thrown sideways by overly tart, green citrus. I am convinced time will smooth this out though, post-disgorgement.

(40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 5% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Disgorged late 2011; 5 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Ripe red pears on the nose lead into a full-bodied palate that is highlighted by ripe and slightly bitter fruit. The mid-palate is a little weak, but this shows good potential and should make a very nice 2011 wine.

(100% Pinot Noir; Ludes; La Pert plot planted in 1983; Picked on the last day of harvest; Enamel tanks; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Rich on the nose and coarse on the palate, this wine appears to fight some internal battles, but in a good way. A tart citrus structure and steely minerality form a solid baseline, but bitter, spicy cream notes challenge its composure. The end result is tasty and very interesting - the contrasts in style actually work together quite well.

(100% Chardonnay; Ludes; Les Sante plot planted in 1974; Picked on the last day of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Tart peach, apple and a hint of wildflower all come to the fore in this solid example of the vintage. This shows good length and plenty of brightness. While this isn't a superstar, it is very good.

(100% Chardonnay; Ludes; Les Sante plot planted in 1974; Picked on the last day of harvest; Enamel tanks; Malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

A bit subdued on the nose, ripe peach and bright citrus open things up on the palate. Spiced cream also appears, accompanied by a touch of vanilla. While I currently think the oak is a bit strong, I expect that will subside over time - this shows potential.

(100% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Vines planted in 1986; Picked during the second week of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Quite peachy on the nose, with plenty of upfront fruit, the mouthfeel thins over time and gets a little rough. There are a few fluffy dough notes, but, all in all, this is a fairly average vin clair for the vintage.

(100% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Two plots of vines planted in 1963; Picked during the first week of harvest; Enamel tanks; Malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Spicy peach, fruity citrus, and a nice dose of tart acid highlight a very well made wine. This also possess a lovely, salty minerality on the finish that offers both elegance and complexity.

(100% Pinot Meunier; Ludes; Two plots of vines planted in 1963; Picked during the first week of harvest; 350L oak barrel; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Spicy and austere on the nose, this is not showing very much right now. The palate is round and has some apple character, but, like the nose, it seems to be keeping everything inside. I can see this being used for non-vintage blending material, but not much else.

(100% Pinot Noir; Ludes; 600L oak barrel; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Spicy and full of acidity, this grabs you right away. Smooth minerality and tart red berry give this both balance and finesse. This shows excellent use of oak and benefits from the lack of malolactic fermentation.

(100% Pinot Noir; Ludes; Two vineyards; Picked during the first week of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

A subdued nose offers citrus and red fruit on the palate. Decent enough for the vintage, this illustrates the challenges faced by many in 2011 – “average” vin clair from other vintages is usually better than this.

(100% Pinot Noir; Ludes; Two vineyards; Picked during the first week of harvest; Enamel tanks; Malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Dark red berries and citrus on the nose lead into a round, fruity body that is quite easy to drink and shows plenty of personality. A round, relaxing Pinot Noir from 2011.

(100% Pinot Noir; Ludes; Picked during the second week of harvest; Enamel tanks; Malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Apple blossom and citrus form the core of this well-structured wine that hails from a vineyard located adjacent to one of Vilmart's better parcels. This also has a very nice mineral streak to it. One of the best wines I have tasted from Huré Frères.

(100% Chardonnay; Purchased fruit in Rilly-la-Montagne; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Villedommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Oak and spice dominate the nose, though fruit is able to squeak through on the palate. Tart mineral and cream highlight the finish. This has potential, although the oak and fruit appear to be battling for supremacy at the moment.

(100% Chardonnay; Purchased fruit in Villers-Marmery; Picked during the middle of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Banana, bread dough, and orange all show up on an exotic nose, which morphs into a palate of elegance and richness. Overall, this is quite charming and should be very enjoyable given time.

(100% Chardonnay; Purchased fruit in Villers-Marmery; Picked during the middle of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

2011 Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair

Rating	Potential
NR	NR

Spicy citrus that is dominated by lemon greets the nose. This shows a touch of butter and cream, but tartness and acidity are prominent. The finish is disappointing, lacking length, but this wine does have some potential.

(100% Chardonnay; Vitry-le-François; 10-20 year old vines; Picked during the middle of harvest; Oak; No malolactic fermentation)

Champagne News and Updates

The 2012 Growing Season Is Underway

It seems that the “new normal” in Champagne is anything but. Over the past fifteen to twenty years, very few vintages have been typical in the historic sense, and so far, 2012 indicates that normalcy will continue to be a distant dream. While it is far too early to make any type of qualitative prediction on the vintage, it is not too early to say that things have certainly been interesting.

A very early budbreak in late March was the result of a late winter heat wave that allowed the vines to mature far ahead of schedule. Early ripening isn't a bad thing in and of itself, but it did put the vines at risk for inevitable frost damage come April. (Champagne is cold weather country through April, and early May frosts are not unheard of.) Frost hit the Côte des Blancs and Aube the hardest, and in some cases entire vineyard blocks may be lost; the worst losses could approach 33%. Generally, though, most producers can expect to lose 5-10% of their normal yield (assuming no further catastrophes). April hail further damaged some vines, but if we consider these early weather events to act as natural yield reduction, the damage isn't beyond hope.

What this bumpy start doesn't do is leave a lot of margin for error for the remainder of the 2012 growing season. If another problem erupts, yields could drop to levels that would allow very few wines besides non-vintage cuvées to be made. Remember 2003? In addition to the summer heat, yields were essentially halved thanks to the spring frosts resulting in far fewer wines than normal; 2012 could be an unhappy repeat. In addition to the aforementioned challenges, 2012 weather has been prone to relatively large swings in temperature thus far. Although anything but predictable to date, it is worth remembering that there is still plenty of time for things to even out and for the vines to thrive this year.



How will 2012 turn out in Champagne?

Comparing 2010 to 2011



Top wines from Aÿ were produced in 2011

The last issue of this newsletter (Issue 13.5) presented vintage summaries for 2010 and 2011. To my way of thinking it is quite clear that neither vintage is anything to write home about, although, at its core, 2011 has more potential than 2010 to produce good wines. Having now tasted wines from both vintages multiple times, often side by side, this is still my opinion, but many producers I have spoken to feel otherwise.

Everyone remembers how challenging 2010 was due to rot. Rampant mold outbreaks dictated thorough selection to procure only the best grapes in both vineyard and winery, and resulted in lower than desired yields. Two-thousand-eleven wasn't a cakewalk either, marked by odd weather patterns and uneven ripening, but many producers were happy to relax a bit more at harvest compared to the previous year. After all, the grapes appeared healthier. Weather-wise, there is no reason for 2010 to produce better Champagne than 2011. Nonetheless, many producers are now professing their preference for 2010 as they feel their maniacal zeal to select rigorously in the vineyards and winery has resulted in wines that have overachieved in comparison to original expectations. In contrast, they feel their wines from 2011 have not met initial expectations.

In my opinion, there are several producers who did a really good job and have set the standard for what could have and probably should have been produced in 2011 – Agrapart, Bereche et Fils, Pascal Doquet, Goutorbe, Charles Heidsieck, Laherte, Margaine, Penet-Chardonnet, Piper-Heidsieck, Louis Roederer, Savart, Tarlant, Veuve Clicquot, and Vilmart. I look forward to their wines from this year (this assumes they each decide to declare – sometimes quality is not the only factor at play when determining whether or not to make a vintage wine).

While there is definitely a wide spread in quality in 2011 wines and not all the grapes used were of top quality, most producers should have managed to get quite a bit of good juice. If you worked as hard in 2011 as you did in 2010 you could make pretty good wine, and it pains me to hear producers extol the virtue of their 2010s simply because they worked harder in that vintage... a vintage that simply didn't offer as much potential.

Magic in the Bottle – Mixing 2009 and 2008

Two-thousand-eight is shaping up to be the best vintage since 1996 and 1988. It has wonderful, cutting acidity, precise, pure fruit, elegance, finesse, and power. Perhaps most impressive, many wines now resting on the lees or already released show amazing potential for aging. Two-thousand-nine is also a great vintage; it isn't quite at the same level as 2008, but it shows lovely fruit that is open and ready to go. It also will age well, but its bright character contrasts nicely with the more structured 2008s.

When the 2008-based non-vintage wines started to enter the market twelve to eighteen months ago, the results were fantastic; they were easily the best non-vintage wines since the 2002-based cohort, and showed the potential to surpass them. Amazingly, what I have tasted from the 2009-based non-vintage wines has surpassed those of 2008 and has exceeded the highest of my expectations. In a word, I'm thrilled.

It is important to remember that the composition of most non-vintage wines involves a majority of one year (what I call the base year) plus one, two, three, four, and sometimes up to ten or more other vintages blended in. So in a 2009-based wine, the second most plentiful wine in the non-vintage blend is often 2008, and when these two vintages dominate the blend, the results can be magic. The fruit-forward, open base of 2009 and boldly structured reserves from 2008 work synergistically to create truly thrilling Champagne.

Examples of already-on-the-market, fantastic non-vintage blends dominated by wines from 2009 and 2008 can be found from Bereche et Fils, René Geoffroy, Laherte, Lahaye, Nicolas Maillart, Margaine, Pierre Péters, Savart, Vazart-Coquart, and Vilmar. Additionally, many still-to-be released wines from other producers show great potential. As these wines flow onto the market over the next couple of years, I urge you to be on the lookout. From what I have tasted thus far (both released and unreleased), the blend of 2008 and 2009 is the best raw material for non- and multi-vintage Champagnes that I have tasted over the last two decades. In fact, I enjoy it so much (for both current drinking and aging) that I have urged several producers to consider creating a special prestige cuvée made of a blend of just these two years. Nothing would be better in my eyes than a 2008/2009 multi-vintage *Dom Pérignon*, *Dom Ruinart*, *Les Barres*, *Coeur de Cuvée*, or *Krug*. Be on the lookout for these wines, if they come to pass, and please remember that you heard it here first.

Eating My Words – 1996 Dom Pérignon Oenothèque



Dom Pérignon Chef de Cave Richard Geoffroy and the 1996 Oenothèque

This may sound strange, but nothing makes me happier than watching a winemaker gloat and dance around in front of me while I am forced to eat my words. Just such an occasion recently involved the *1996 Dom Pérignon Oenothèque* and a certain Richard Geoffroy.

I first tasted this wine in 2009 in a pre-release format that was disgorged in 2008 (which is the exact format in which the wine was eventually released). The tasting was with winemaker Richard Geoffroy, and I told him at that time that I thought the wine was very good, but too young to be released. I thought it need another year or two of age either post-disgorgement or on the lees, but I was certain that releasing it before 2011 was a mistake. The wine I tasted wasn't at the same level as the original release of the 1996, let alone the stunning *1995 Oenothèque* that was also on the market at time. Richard took my comments in stride and said that that he, too, thought the wine would get better over time, but that he found it quite charming already, having planned a 2010 launch.

I was given the opportunity to taste the wine a couple more times (in different venues) in 2010 shortly after its official release and it showed the same as it did during the 2009 tasting. As such, I chose to purchase more *1995 Oenothèque* for my personal cellar and passed on the 1996.

Flash forward to the spring of 2012 and I once again found myself tasting the *1996 Oenothèque* with Richard at the winery, but this time the wine was stunning. It had developed into everything one could hope for, with zesty swagger, floral spice, sizzling citrus, strong, dark minerality, and a beautiful cream finish. I'm sure the surprise and wonder on my face were entertaining, prompting Richard to coyly ask what I thought this time. I couldn't hold back. I told him that it was wonderful and

far better than I had anticipated. Richard stood up, smiled, did a little tap dance and told me that he remembered my uncertainty and was overjoyed that I could finally appreciate the wine's beauty. There was nothing else to do, but admit that I had been wrong. The *1996 Dom Pérignon Oenothèque* has turned into a kick-bootie wine – no questions asked.

Since I don't currently own any, there is now a gaping hole in my cellar that I need to fill, and while I recommend you go out and purchase a few bottles, please be kind and leave a few for me. Luckily for both of us, the price today remains similar to that at release – we are likely to pay \$300-\$400 US for this nectar of the gods.

The 1996 is the best young *Oenothèque* that has been released (I consider the “young” *Oenothèques* to be anything from 1990 forward), it improves on the stunning original 1996 release, and there is no question that it can stand shoulder to shoulder with the best of the *Oenothèque* range and the best of Champagne. Best of all, you can drink it now or cellar it for later because it will excel in either case.

Bollinger Introduces Le Petit Magnum

It is widely known that Bollinger uses magnums to age their reserve wines, and that they are big fans of magnums in general. They (and I) believe that a magnum-sized vessel is the ideal size in which to age wine because a) the ratio of wine to air, and b) the amount of the wine's surface area that is exposed to air in the bottle neck are both optimal. Recently, the Bollinger winemaking team embarked upon a mission to make their 750 mL bottles emulate more closely these magnum effects. Coincidentally, the marketing department was interested in making the Bollinger bottles stand out on the shelf. So when the winemaking and marketing folks found an old bottle from 1846 in the cellars, they discovered a way to do both.

This historic Bollinger bottle has dimensions that much more closely mimic those of a magnum than those of the regular 750 mL. (The shape of the bottle influences the volume of air, the volume of wine, the size of the neck and the size of bottom.) The adoption of the ‘new’ bottle shape met little internal resistance, and the team named the bottle type “1846”, although most folks now refer to it as “Le Petit Magnum” or “The Little Magnum”. Bollinger is hopeful that the new shape will allow their wine to evolve more slowly and with more complexity post-disgorgement – just as they find their magnums do.

Visually, the new bottle shape is just slightly wider and curvier in appearance, with a thinner, slightly longer neck and a wider bottom. The changes are subtle, but the bottle is distinct from the standard shape. Also, in an effort to limit the use of natural resources, the new bottle does not use any more glass than the old one. Le Petit Magnum will debut with the next release of the *NV Bollinger Special Cuvée* (you should see it appear on the shelves this year) and it will eventually be used across the entire sparkling wine range. (The still wine, *La Côte aux Enfants*, will remain in the old 750 mL bottle.) Half-bottles, 750s, magnums, and jeroboams will all follow the new shape. Interestingly, the new shape will change the dimensions of the magnum and jeroboam bottles as well, though only slightly.

Will this new shape make a difference? Only time will tell, but I applaud Bollinger for considering more than just aesthetics when selecting a new bottle style.



The old standard bottle and new “little magnum” style

One to Watch

Champagne François Diligent

The upscale brand of the Moutard-Diligent family

Since 1927

In 1927, François Diligent began producing his own wines from vineyards in Buxeuil which his family had been farming since 1642. The wines were launched under his name; subsequently as the family grew, the brand name changed twice – first, to Moutard-Diligent and then later shortened to simply Moutard. Today, the François Diligent trademark remains in the Moutard house's control, having been used on occasion as a second label targeted to low cost retailers such as supermarkets.

By 2008, François Moutard was looking to expand his line with something of high quality and unique in its expression. He also wasn't too thrilled that the François Diligent name be remembered as a second class cuvée. At the same time, Wine Portfolio Creator/Importer Extraordinaire Boris Politi was looking for a Champagne he could stand behind, and soon entered into a partnership with one of the leading and most respected producers in the Côte des Bars – François Moutard.

And so the re-launch of the François Diligent line was set in motion. It is considered the prestige label of Moutard, with a focus on quality and a fair price point, offering wines that express the best of the Côte des Bars. François Moutard handles the winemaking and Boris Politi leads marketing and sales, also deciding the direction/expression of each cuvée. Each of the wines has been created as something unique, different from what Moutard is doing and from other Champagnes. They use six different grape varieties with a heavy lean towards Pinot Noir, varying levels of dosage are utilized, they age on the lees under cork, experiment with different malolactic techniques, employ both steel and oak, and have fostered a curious eye toward anything that express the best of what Buxeuil and Polisy have to offer. Additionally, most of the wines come entirely from one vintage, even though they are often labeled as non-vintage.

The wines have only been on the market for two to three years, (the marketing focus thus far has been on high-end restaurants and wine shops in Europe), but they are slowly expanding into both Asia and the Americas. Personally, I find the wines fascinating, delicious, and extremely well priced. Moreover, successive releases have shown excellent promise. Every wine in the range is not only unique, but good. I highly encourage you to give them a try, especially the *Epiphanie Rosé* which is not only a terrific Rosé, but one of the best examples of non-traditional grape blends I have ever tasted, and my personal favorite of the range.

- **NV Brut** – 100% Pinot Noir made in steel with malolactic fermentation; dosage is ~ 7 g/L
- **NV Trois Pinots** – 33% each Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Pinot Blanc; fermented in oak, sees malolactic fermentation, and is dosed at ~ 7 g/L
- **NV Pinot Blanc** – 100% Pinot Blanc in stainless steel, undergoes malolactic fermentation; dosage is ~ 7g/L
- **NV Pinot Zero** – 100% Pinot Noir from a single vineyard in Buxeuil; steel fermentation, no malolactic fermentation and no dosage
- **NV Rosé** – 100% Pinot Noir Saignée made in steel, undergoes malolactic fermentation; dosage is ~ 10 g/L
- **NV Rosé Zero** – 100% Pinot Noir in steel without malolactic fermentation or dosage
- **NV Epiphanie Rosé** – 1/6 each Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Arbanne, Petit Meslier, and Pinot Blanc with red wine addition from the *NV Rosé Zero*; This sees oak and malolactic fermentation; dosage is in the Extra Brut range
- **NV Noir de Seine** – 100% Pinot Noir from select plots; this goes through malolactic fermentation and is dosed as an Extra Brut
- **Millésime** – 100% Chardonnay in either steel and/or oak with malolactic fermentation; dosed as an Extra Brut
- **Millésime Oenothèque** – Identical to the Millésime only it is a late-released older vintage

Contact Information:

Champagne François Diligent
10110 Buxeuil, France

Phone: + 33 (0)3 26 36 65 65

Fax: + 33 (0)3 26 36 65 66

champagne.diligent@orange.fr

On the Rise

J.L. Vergnon



For almost two centuries the Vergnon family has tended vines in the Côte de Blancs region of Champagne, but it wasn't until 1950 that Jean-Louis Vergnon considered making his own wine. He began that year by working with a local co-operative with the goal of one day controlling the entire production so that *his* grapes would go into *his* bottles with *his* name on it. Quite some time passed before this desire became reality, but by 1985 J.L. Vergnon had produced his first Champagne.

Headquartered in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, this small grower has 5 ha of prime vineyard locations in Le Mesnil, Avize and Oger. They received high praise after their first wines were released, but there was no resting on their laurels for them. Instead, as Jean-Louis eased into retirement, the house made a move that most growers would find unthinkable – they brought in a replacement winemaker...who wasn't a family member.

In 2002 Cristophe Constant (pictured above) was hired to oversee the winemaking and vineyards. He had worked previously as a winemaker at Pol Roger and was highly regarded within the region. It was an outright coup by the Vergnon family to talk him into joining them, and he has worked his magic in every vintage since. In fact, he has been instrumental in making J.L. Vergnon one of the best producers in not just the Côte de Blancs and Le-Mesnil-sur-Oger, but all of Champagne.

The style of the wines is one of ripe, sweet, structured fruit formulated with elegance and plenty of zest. Cristophe has a deft hand when it comes to using oak, avoiding malolactic fermentation, and dosing at a low levels or even leaving dosage out entirely. The entire range is worth trying and performs well above its price point. My personal favorites are the *Résonance* and *Confidence* cuvées (the *Confidence* is quite possibly the best wine no one has ever tried). When it comes to value, however, I dare you to find a wine that delivers more than the entry-level *Conversation Brut* – it is a spectacular example of what the Côte de Blancs does best. Go get these wines!

- **NV Brut Conversation** – 100% Chardonnay from Avize, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, and Oger made in stainless steel
- **NV Éloquence Extra Brut** – 100% Chardonnay from Avize, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, and Oger made in stainless steel and dosed as an Extra Brut. This sees one more year of aging on the lees than does the *Brut Conversation*.
- **Vintage Résonance** – 100% Chardonnay from Le Mesnil-sur-Oger and Oger made in stainless steel
- **Vintage Confidence** – 100% Chardonnay from only Le Mesnil-sur-Oger made in oak without dosage

Contact Information:

Champagne J.L. Vergnon

1 Grande Rue

51190 Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, France

+33 (0)3.26.57.53.86

contact@champagne-jl-vergnon.fr

<http://www.champagne-jl-vergnon.com>

What's in That Bottle?

1985 Veuve Clicquot Grande Dame



The current Grande Dame bottle on the left and the old style bottle on the right – both contained the 1985 vintage

Nearly everyone is familiar with today's Veuve Clicquot *Grande Dame* bottle. It is rotund, prestigious-looking and the quality of its contents are indisputable. Fans of older Champagne will also recognize the uniquely curved bottle that originally held the *Grand Dame* starting at its inception in 1962. The transition from old to new packaging occurred smack dab in the middle of the release of the 1985 vintage. The questions pondered by those of us who drink *Grande Dame* are, why did they change the bottle mid-run, and is there any difference between the wines in each bottle?

When Veuve Clicquot decided to change the *Grande Dame* bottle it was a big deal. Only one bottle had ever housed the famous cuvée, intentionally designed to be both unique and easily recognizable, but it had its negatives. The oddball shape made it awkward to riddle

by hand, and yeast sediment routinely got caught in the curves during riddling, resulting in cloudy wine. The taste wasn't affected but the clarity was, and most consumers don't want particulate in their Champagne, especially one that they paid top dollar for. By 1986 Veuve Clicquot owned a substantial stock of the original bottles that they didn't want to sell or throw away, but they were ready for a change.

In the early summer of 1986, the 1985 *Grande Dame* was put into its original bottle. A 35-40% Chardonnay, 60-65% Pinot Noir blend went into the bottle stock on hand, but that used up only half the wine. Since there was not yet a new bottle 'on deck', Veuve Clicquot decided to hold the rest of the blend in tank until they could finalize the new bottle design and take delivery of it.

It was late summer of 1987 by the time the new bottles arrived, and by then the wine in tank had evolved (becoming richer on the palate), as wine is wont to do. Chef de Caves Jacques Peters blended in some Chardonnay he had in reserve from the 1985 vintage to remedy the situation. This lightened the blend, returning it to his original vision for the cuvée. The end result was a 40-45% Chardonnay, 55-60% Pinot Noir version of the 1985 *Grande Dame* in the new (and current) bottle style. This blend was bottled a year after the original was, and it was released around a year later. Each wine saw approximately the same amount of time on the lees in the bottle. Retailers around the world took delivery of one or both version of the wine, depending on the date the 1985 was released into their market.

The two wines taste very, very similar today. Both exhibit plenty of life and elegant, creamy, slightly doughy citrus kissed by bitter minerality. I admit to having a slight preference for the newer bottling which is slightly more zesty and reveals a bit more cream, but I would be happy to drink either. When tasted separately, my (and many other critics') notes are almost identical. It is only by tasting them side by side that I can really notice the differences, a testament to the talent of the legendary Jacques Peters. For anyone who has wondered not only why two different bottles of the 1985 *Grande Dame* exist, but whether or not the wine was the same inside, I hope I've solved this small mystery of modern Champagne for you.

~~Un~~solved Mysteries: Goutorbe

There are few families as beloved in Champagne as the Goutorbes in Aÿ. They are hard working and involved in just about every aspect of the Champagne business there is – vine nursery, vine growing, Champagne making, tourism – and when they do something they do it right. This is especially true of their winemaking: Goutorbe Champagnes are top-notch across the lineup. Well balanced, easy to drink, expressive, and with great aging capability, every single cuvée is on my list to add to the cellar every year. I especially like that they now stamp the front label of their non-vintage wines with a code that tells you both the disgorgement date and the base vintage. The code stamped on the front label follows the format below:

LBMMYY



On a bottle of Goutorbe Champagne, the code stamped on the front label of **LBMMYY can be translated as:**

B: identifies the last digit of the base year
MM: is the month of disgorgement
YY: is the last two digits of the year of disgorgement

For example, a bottle with a code of:

L81211

means that you have a bottle of wine that is based on the 2008 vintage and was disgorged in December of 2011.

With this information, you can now tell the base vintage and disgorgement date of a non-vintage bottle of Goutorbe Champagne.

Champagne Tasting Notes

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2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebène	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites	Vintage Blend	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
2002	Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir	Vintage Blend	84-86	85-87	37
NV	Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004	NV Blend	88-90	88-90	37
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005	NV Blend	86-89	88-90	38
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Millésime	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Réserve - 2004 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
2002	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	41
2004	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	88-90	41
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdB	87-89	89-91	41
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	82-84	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	42
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdB	85-87	86-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	42
2004	Didier-Ducos Millésime	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
2003	Dom Pérignon	Vintage Blend	90-92	91-93	44
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
2002	Egly-Ouriat Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	88+	44
NV	Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44
2003	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Empreinte	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	45

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NV	René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2006	Pierre Gimonnet Cuvée Gastronome	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Paradoxe	Vintage Blend	85-87	86+	46
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
2004	Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	47
NV	Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	47
1999	Grongnet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	82-84	-	47
NV	Gruet Brut Sélection	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	48
2005	Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite	Vintage Blend	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Sélection - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	48
2006	Marc Hébrart Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	48
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice	NV Blend	78-80	79-81	49
2003	Henriot Millésime	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	49
NV	Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	50
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base	MV Blend	90-92	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
2006	Jean Lallement Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	51
NV	Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	51
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdB	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	54
2005	Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime	Vintage Blend	81-83	81-83	54
2000	Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons	Vintage Blend	87-89	89-91	54
2007	Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	54
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56

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NV	Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdN	89-91	90-92	56
2004	Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine	Vintage Blend	86-88	86-88	57
2004	Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	57
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
2002	Pol Roger Vintage	Vintage Blend	89-91	90-92	57
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base	NV Blend	90-92	90-92	59
2005	Louis Roederer Cristal	Vintage Blend	90-92	90-92	60
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée de Jean Fannièr Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
2005	Varnier-Fannièr Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Cuvée Édouard Werlé	NV Blend	85-87	86+	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	61
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62

2004 Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Creamy, bright, yet pleasantly bitter citrus and mineral on the nose alert you to the fact that this is bigger and bolder than a Côte des Blancs Chardonnay. Yellow apple, bitter lemon, a touch of cream, and a sunshine-filled finish highlight a terrific wine that really blossoms if you give it an hour to breathe and rise in temperature. While Berru (located in the northern Montagne de Reims) is not the first village that comes to mind when I think of top Chardonnay, it has garnered much-deserved respect within Champagne circles, especially among the negociants. Give this a try for a Blanc de Blancs that is different and tasty.

(100% Chardonnay; Berru; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; \$55-65 US)

NV L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

The addition of the "bucket mix" is new to this cuvée starting in this vintage. Past releases were limited to the three main Champagne grapes, but Aubry is now adding Arbanne, Petit Meslier, Pinot Blanc, and Pinot Gris to this wine in an effort to more clearly express the family signature. Lucky for us, the first release is a rousing success. Fruity orange aromas, fresh, bright, zesty citrus taste, and a solid, medium-bodied mouth feel create a pleasurable Champagne. This shows especially well with thirty minutes or so after opening.

(25% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier, 5% blend of Arbanne, Petit Meslier, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris; 2008 base with 55% reserve blend from 1999-2007; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 6 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-60 US)

NV L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Aromas of soft, fruity red berries are both attractive and enticing. On the palate, dark berry flavors take hold. Very expressive and full of fruit, the wine avoids sweetness entirely. This is well balanced, pure, and well-suited to the dinner table due to its depth and boldness of flavor. A great buy for the price.

(45% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 15% still Pinot Meunier red wine from the Les Noues parcel in Jouy-les-Reims; Pure 2008 vintage; Jouy-les-Reims and Villedommange; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; \$50-65 US)

2006 L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Green-tinged citrus aromas start this off and eventually morph into flavors of lime and red berry. Some doughy notes appear on the mid-palate, but this never quite gets off the ground for me. It has a wonderful freshness to it, but tilts a little too much to the greener side for my preference.

(15% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier co-pressed, 20% Arbanne, 20% Petit Meslier, 10% Pinot Meunier red wine addition; Jouy-les-Reims; Chardonnay fermented in oak, all else sees stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Lower pressure than normal - around 4 atm; Disgorged early 2011; MCR dosage \$70-95 US)

2005 L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebene

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

The aroma of fresh-baked banana bread is enticing on the nose and complements the Pinot Noir and oak well. The palate is similarly tasty, but comes off dry and a bit heavy. There are a few notes of bright citrus and peach coming into the picture, but this one-dimensional wine leaves me wanting more. I can't help but wonder how this would have done with a higher dosage.

(60% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Noir, 25% Pinot Meunier; Oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; MCR dosage; \$60-80 US)

2005 L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

Very floral on the nose, this is sadly a bit green in the mouth, exuding waxy, under-ripe citrus character. It does show good brightness, but the wine is more interesting than truly good - especially for the price. This will certainly have its fans but, while well made, I would recommend spending your time elsewhere within the Aubry range.

(10% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Meunier, 15% Arbanne, 20% Petit Meslier, 25% Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris co-pressed; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; MCR dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Citrus and cream aromas are light and easy going – they are also not something I would expect given the large percentage of Pinot Meunier in the blend. The wine carries an impressive streak of acidity that cuts through some of the clumsy, overbearing peach and bread flavors. Very well made and easy to enjoy especially as an aperitif, this may not get much better with age or be especially long-lived. However, it represents a great buy for right now and is something that most people will enjoy.

(30% Chardonnay, 10% Pinot Noir, 60% Pinot Meunier; 2006 base vintage with reserve wines from 2005 and 2004; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; Mytik Diam cork; \$25-40 US)

NV Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

This is straightforward, easy to drink Rosé with plenty of bright, tart citrus and raspberry on the nose and palate. There are a few clunky, bitter notes, but overall, this is enjoyable if not memorable. In this way, it is a little like the white *Grande Réserve* – it won't make you jump for joy, but it fits the bill for its price point and will easily please.

(60% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir, 20% Pinot Meunier; Red wine addition; 2006 base vintage; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; Mytik Diam cork; \$30-45 US)

NV Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Easy to drink and straightforward, this wine offers a pleasant combination of soft fruit and clean citrus minerality in a perfect example of the Louis Barthélémy house style. In addition to the citrus and mineral character, the palate has notes of apple, pear, and yeasty dough. There is a clunkiness towards the end of the palate, but a brisk mineral finish helps to wipe this from memory. At the start of its life the wine presents a drier profile, but give it at least three years of cellaring and a honeyed, bready character will give it a touch more body.

(20% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, 30% Pinot Meunier; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2010; \$30-45 US)

NV Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Fairly bright and fruity on the nose, this wine is largely composed of strawberry and cherry with a hint of citrus. The palate tones the fruit down a notch leaving red citrus to support its frame. Juicy strawberry and tart cherry approach at the middle, but they are nicely tempered by clean minerality. Refreshing and very easy to drink, this is a perfect summer porch sipper. With a few years in the cellar, the fruit will gain a touch of meaty richness which will marry well with the citrus and mineral aspects.

(70% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Noir, 5% red wine addition; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2010; \$40-55 US)

2002 Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Bread dough, yeast, lemon, and pronounced minerals characterize the nose. The palate is led by crisp lemon and lime with an underlying minerality that comes on strong towards the finish. As this warms up, it develops a creamy, pastry dough profile that is likely to become more pronounced with age. This is easy to drink right now and should continue to evolve nicely over the next decade. I do wish it was more expressive as I find it lacking the typical 2002 vintage signature. Nevertheless, it excels in the category of reasonably priced vintage wine that you can serve as an aperitif or throughout the night.

(90% Chardonnay, 10% Pinot Noir; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2010; \$45-70 US)

NV Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004

Rating	Potential
88-90	88-90

A yeasty, leesy, citrus kicks this wine off with a bang. I've always admired how Trépail's Chardonnay and Pinot Noir manage to play with rich fruit flavor while maintaining a focused, citrus-driven minerality. Bread dough, creamy vanilla custard, intense lemon, orange, and zesty minerals on the palate combine effortlessly to make this one heck of a wonderful wine - especially at a price of 30 Euros or less (in Champagne). Not overly complex, but might tasty, this is good stuff indeed.

(70-80% Chardonnay, 20-30% Pinot Noir; Trépail, \$55-70 US)

2004 Bernardin Rosé

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Fruity and toasty, tart cherry and raspberry lemonade aromas are first to appear. This is a charming wine that showcases bright, well-structured red fruit mixed with toasted bread and a creamy minerality. Easy to drink, easy to understand, and available for a song in Champagne (only 20-25 Euros), this wine performs well vintage after vintage.

(Blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir; Trépail, \$45-65 US)

NV Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Zesty, rich, and rambunctious right now, this could use a little more time to settle, but is almost impossible to resist. The citrus and red stained mineral notes pack quite a punch, and have clearly launched an all-out brawl by the time they reach your mouth, where they pummel biscuity, graham cracker elements. So bold, so powerful, and so expressive - this is what great non-vintage Champagne is all about.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; 2009 base vintage with 25% each 2008 and 2007 reserves; Ambonnay; Stainless steel; Disgorged mi-2011; 11 g/L dosage; \$40-60 US)

NV Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base

Rating	Potential
88-90	88-90

Fruity and expressive on both the nose and palate, ripe red berries and spiced minerals take the fore. I continue to find this to be one of the benchmarks for non-vintage Rosé and powerful Ambonnay fruit. In the past five or six years it has been hard to find another Rosé that has performed at such a consistently high level.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir, Pinot Noir red wine addition; 2009 base vintage with 25% each 2008 and 2007 reserves, Pinot Noir red wine from 2005 and 2004; Ambonnay; Stainless steel; Disgorged mi-2011; 10 g/L dosage; \$45-65 US)

NV Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005

Rating	Potential
86-89	88-90

This wine lets its presence be known as soon as the bottle is opened. Powerful, piercing aromas of citrus, almond, walnut, and vanilla announce that this is no namby-pamby grape drink, but a full throttle, balls-to-the-wall type of experience. The palate is similarly energetic, though slightly less intense, whipping a citrus backbone of red grapefruit into shape as it balances rich honeyed dough and vanilla spice. At first the wine acts one-dimensional (and that dimension is big), but give it three or four hours or even an entire day and it will even out. This is more than just Champagne with oak: this is a fruit-filled pleasure and a very fun ride. Easily the best *Julie* effort in a number of years and one that will only get better over the next five.

(Fairly even mix of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir; Ambonnay; Pure 2005 vintage; Aged for ~1 year in oak barrels between 0-10 years old; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; ~ 1500 bottles produced; \$90-120 US)

2004 Bollinger Grande Année Rosé

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Through the mid-1990s, Bollinger's *Grande Année Rosé* tended to come off as too big, burly, and spicy for my tastes, but an injection of fruit into the 1996 and 1997 vintages was a welcome change. The fruit really came into its own in the 1999 and 2002 vintages, and now, with this vintage, it has completed its ascent from the bottom to the top of the palate.

Full of spicy notes, the dark red- and blue-berry fruit is sitting in the background. Biscuit dough comes through along with a touch of oak, though I expect the oak will fade over time. The finish sees a bite of fresh grapefruit, which I find delectable. This is a bigger-boned Rosé and one that can stand proudly at the dinner table. Two-thousand-four is known as a more elegant, fresh, crisp vintage, although this wine is anything but. To my mind, the 2004 has more in common with 1996 and 1997 than the blockbuster 1999 and 2002 releases which is a little disappointing (relatively speaking), but this is still a very solid wine.

(32% Chardonnay, 68% Pinot Noir with 5% Red Wine from La Côte Aux Enfants vineyard in Ay; Fermented in small oak barrels; Second fermentation under cork; Disgorged late 2011; \$150-225 US)

2006 Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée

Rating	Potential
90-92	90-92

Consistently my favorite from Cédric Bouchard's range, this wine always transports me into an out-of-body experience. Deep and complex, bold yet also elegant, this wine invites raspberries to mingle with a subtle creaminess on the mid-palate. There is a touch of tannin that alludes to a dry, dark, mystery, but everything is superbly balanced between sprightly acidity and lovely fruit.

(100% Pinot Noir; Pure 2006 vintage; Saignee method; Single Vineyard Creux d'Enfer in Celles-sur-Ource; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2010; No dosage; 300-500 bottles produced; \$135-200 US)

2007 Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée

Rating	Potential
89-91	89-91

Not quite as good as the spellbinding 2006 version, this is still a delicious and haunting experience. Intense, well-structured dark red berry notes are found on the nose and palate. Intriguing red citrus deftly plays off of the darker notes to lift the wine higher and liven it up. Well made and, while lacking some of the concentration of 2006, downright spunky.

(100 % Pinot Noir; Pure 2007 vintage; Saignee method; Single Vineyard Creux d'Enfer in Celles-sur-Ource; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; No dosage; 300-500 bottles produced; \$135-200 US)

NV Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Blanc de Noirs Val Vilaine - pure 2009

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Red peach aromas lead into a light, delicate, fruity palate highlighted by soft red citrus. Hints of red berry also come into play along with a touch of dry, slightly bitter minerality. All these aromas and flavors together fashion a wine of finesse and elegance. This is the best "out of the blocks" *Val Vilaine* I have tasted and I think its quality is equal to that of the potential of the 2008 version. Cédric's entire line-up is worth exploring, but this entry-level cuvée - which is 25-66% less expensive than the rest - is better than or almost as good as pricier wines in their current format. If your wallet, palate, and brain were to start a financial discussion, QPR (Quality-Price Ratio) and ROI (Return On Investment) will favor this wine.

(100% Pinot Noir; Stainless steel; 1.419 ha Val Vilaine vineyard in Polisy; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged April 2011; \$50-70 US)

2007 Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé

Rating	Potential
82-84	83-85

Sharp, bright, and slightly green citrus mixes with salty mineral to form a wine that will no doubt delight lovers of very dry, mineral-driven Champagne. This has incredible purity and focus, but I have to admit that I find it hard to drink more than a glass at a time. The dry, tart, under-ripe citrus notes overwhelm my palate. Clearly, Cedric put a lot of hard work into this expressive wine, but it is my least favorite *Haut Lamblée* to date. That said, I do think a year or two will smooth out the rough edges.

(100 % Chardonnay; 0.1180 ha Haut Lamblée vineyard in Celles-sur-Ource; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged April 2011; No dosage; \$100-130 US)

A Classic Vintage of Les Ursules

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

NV Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009

This is the wine that made me fall in love with Cedric Bouchard and every time I taste it I am brought back to that first encounter. Though it is tough to follow his brilliant 2008, this competes ably with lively, red-tinged citrus, bitter berry, bread dough and bracingly dry minerals. There is also a light meatiness to remind the palate of the vintage's character. Lest you be worried, this version retains its signature elegance, but compared to past vintages, it has a bit more fruit. If I had to choose one wine from this producer, it would be this wine (regardless of vintage); to me, it is Cedric's signature wine and his highest achievement.

(100% Pinot Noir; 0.9721 ha Les Ursules vineyard in Celles-sur-Ource; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged July 2011; \$70-105 US)

NV Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Floral citrus, unbaked dough, sweet lemon, and juicy peach make this a terrific, sunshine-filled, easy drinking wine. It doesn't have quite the depth or expression of the 2004 version, but is an absolute success for the 2005 vintage. Over time, this should acquire attractive pastry notes.

100% Chardonnay; Single vineyard Les Heurte-bises in Merfy; Pure 2005; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid 2011; 6-7 g/L dosage-MCR; \$48-60 US)

NV Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Fresh, aromatic, and very tasty, this wine is marked by a great combination of fresh apple, lemon, wheat bread and a subtle leesy note. I can see this medium-bodied style perform well on its own or at the dinner table. It is amazing to see how far this wine has come in the last five years - the previous heaviness has given way to purity, freshness, and finesse.

(60% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir; 80% 2006 base vintage with 20% reserves from 2006 and 2005; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid 2011; 4-5 g/L dosage-MCR; \$35-45 US)

This Delivers Major Bang for the Buck

Rating	Potential
88-90	89-91

2004 Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre

A smashing success of a *Fiacre*, this is initially very round and full-bodied, complemented by hints of spice, bread dough, and a generous helping of peach, pear, and apple. Then, just when you think you know where this wine is going, a wave of soft, elegant, lemon- and orange-led minerality sweeps the palate away. Red citrus from the Pinot Noir grips the finish to give the palate an extra bite. The wine's finesse and elegance will become even more pronounced in five to ten years. Delicious.

(60% Chardonnay from Le Chemin de Reims, 40% Pinot Noir from Les Orizeaux; Merfy; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid-2011; 5-6 g/L dosage-MCR; \$65-85 US)

NV Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

This is the 2007 portion of the *Cuvée Sainte Anne* blend to which red wine from the Les Orizeaux vineyard has been added. At the start this shows a tart, bright, biting, ripe red berry character that grabs the palate with alacrity. Towards the mid-palate softer, ruby red grapefruit notes emerge before this finishes with a long citrus minerality. A wine that takes you on a fun and ever-changing ride.

(40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Noir with Pinot Noir red wine addition from Les Orizeaux; Merfy; Pure 2007 vintage; Pinot Noir red wine addition; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid 2011; 6 g/L dosage-MCR; \$40-55 US)

2004 Chartogne-Taillet Millésime

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

Very open on both the nose and palate, this starts off with a bready character that gives way to red berry, cream, citrus, and unbaked dough. Minerality slices through this wine which, as it has time to breathe, picks up a nice, rich bakery scent. Another success for the Chartogne family!

(Approximately 40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Noir; Les Couarres vineyard in Merfy; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid 2011; 6 g/L dosage; \$50-75 US)

2002 Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ

Rating	Potential
90-92	90-92

A brilliant, big-boned wine that is open, tasty, and impossible to resist. This shows rich, concentrated orange, hints of berry, seductive cream and bread dough, and just the right amount of minerality. Extremely appealing with its forward fruit, this is a wine that screams, "Drink me now!"

(100% Chardonnay; Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$120-150 US - magnum only)

NV Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

This is a gentler, softer release of this wine. It is full-bodied as usual, displaying a finely-tuned core of orange and mineral mixed with yeasty, doughy notes. It lacks a little of the concentration and fruit compared to other releases of this wine, but it is still a solid wine and one that I can easily recommend.

(100% Chardonnay; Pure 2007 vintage; Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2010; 8 g/L dosage; \$50-65 US)

NV Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

This is definitely tasty, with plenty of fruit on both the nose and palate. Peaches on the nose and carry through to the palate where they mix with bright citrus and cream. Certainly easy to drink, it lacks individuality.

(35% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 20% reserves from 2006; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

NV Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Reserve - 2004 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

This marks a new direction for the *Cuvée de Reserve* - in the past it was crafted as its own unique wine, but starting with this release it is now a late-disgorged version of the *NV Brut Tradition*. Now disgorged around one and a half years after its initial release and then held in bottle at the winery for another year or so, this 2004-based version is finally open and ready to go. Bright citrus, pear, and a touch of peachy dough come out to party along with a subtle hint of sweetness. Very nice, this exhibits slightly deeper flavors than the *NV Brut Tradition*.

(35% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier; 2004 base vintage with 6% 2002, 13% 2001, 3% 1998 reserve wines; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2009; 8 g/L dosage; \$50-60 US)

NV Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

This is essentially Chiquet's 2008-based *NV Brut Tradition* with some red wine added. It is very easy to drink, with fresh, tart berries on an open frame. The wonderful bite of tart red citrus on the finish will encourage you to finish the bottle entirely too quickly. Another exceptional 2008-based non-vintage wine.

(35% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir, 45% Pinot Meunier with Red wines added from the 2008 and 2005 vintages; 2008 base vintage; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

2002 Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

Tightly wound and not showing a whole lot right now, I am nonetheless certain this will be fairly long-lived. Concentrated orange and hints of bread dough now present are expected to gain body and expression over time. While there is nothing wrong with drinking this right now, I would wait at least a couple years if this were in my cellar.

(70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir; Aÿ, Dizy, Hautvillers; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$60-80 US)

2004 Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
87-89	88-90

Bursting out of the glass with aromas of orange, apple, dough, and cream. Juicy peach, bright citrus, and doughy orange all show beautifully on the palate. This is bright, open, and a great example of the 2004 vintage. One of my favorite Spécial Club releases from Gaston Chiquet.

(70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir; Aÿ, Dizy, Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$60-80 US)

NV André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26

Rating	Potential
87-89	89-91

New cuvées of this wine seem to be coming out a rapid fire rate lately – I've seen five in the last twelve months, but I'll be damned if this isn't all delicious stuff. Baker's yeast, red berries, strong, ripe citrus, zesty, biscuit dough, and a well balanced dose of minerality come into play. Right now this is on the young side, but give it a year and the power and richness will take control. A benchmark Bouzy Pinot Noir and an easy buy for me every release.

(100% Pinot Noir; 2002 base with reserves from a Solera dating back to the late 1990s; From Clouet's top ten parcels in Bouzy; Malolactic fermentation; 10 g/L dosage; Disgorged early 2012; 1911 bottles produced per release; 26th cuvee produced; \$65-95 US)

NV Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé

Rating	Potential
83-86	83-86

Mineral-led aromas of citrus and dry strawberry are steely, yet somehow comforting, like a racecar with a good safety record. The palate revs its engine with a burst of berry skins plus rough, rocky, slightly bitter citrus. A bit of cream and spice round this out toward the finish line. All in all, an enjoyable Rosé especially for those who like this style. Personally, I would like to see a bit more fruit and a less bumpy mouthfeel, but it is tasty and well made.

(80% Chardonnay with 20% red wine addition; Stainless steel; \$40-55 US)

NV Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
80-82	82-84

The nose emits doughy, yeasty aromas kissed by citrus and peach. The palate greets you with a thick, peachy, doughy hug and transitions quickly into a tart, lime-flavored smooch. Some biscuit notes are just starting to kick up some dust and after a few years will probably help to even the wine out. Right now, the whole package is a bit awkward with its density and tartness, but it should sort itself out nicely given at least two years in the cellar.

(1/3 each of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier; 60% 2007 base vintage and 40% reserve wines from 2006; Jouy-les-Reims and Pargny-les Reims; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid-2010; 12 g/L dosage - MCR; Mytik Diamant Cork; \$42-50 US)

NV Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

The aromas are highlighted by scents of fresh bread dough and a hint of tilled earth. The earthiness fades quickly on the palate though, as the wine coats the mouth instead with a smooth, creamy, doughy citrus and pear character that kicks up bitter spice towards the finish. Altogether the wine is much more gentle than the nose alone would lead you to believe. A very nice step up from the basic Brut, this wine would be perfect to serve with any type of creamy chicken or fish dish.

(20% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 50% Pinot Meunier; 50% 2007 base vintage with 40% reserve wines from 2006 and 10% from 2005; Jouy-les-Reims and Pargny-les Reims; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid-2010; 12 g/L dosage - MCR; Mytik Diamant Cork; \$52-60 US)

2003 Deutz Amour de Deutz Blanc de Blancs

Rating	Potential
87-89	88-90

Full of bright, creamy, doughy citrus, this is an easy drinking wine with decent body to go well with a variety of fish and light chicken dishes. A touch of spicy minerality and yellow apple comes out on the nose to accompany pear on the palate. While this definitely shows the character of 2003 with the lack of minerality, it still carries itself quite well and with spunky zest on the finish. Deutz's tête de cuvée Blanc de Blancs is often overlooked, but is worth searching out if you haven't had it before. The quality is top-notch and the mix of powerful Avize, sharp, mineral Le Mesnil-sur-Oger and more structured, fruity Villers-Marmery creates a complementary blend.

(100% Chardonnay; 95% Avize and Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, 5% Villers-Marmery; Less than 15,000 bottles produced; Disgorged early 2011 \$175-250)

NV Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-89

Toasty peach and bread dough mix with floral notes to form a wonderfully fragrant nose. This is more focused on the palate, where tart citrus, mineral, wheat bread, peach and a hint of spiced banana set the stage. Truly a lovely example of Pinot Meunier, this is much more elegant and mineral-driven than most. (The wine also illustrates just how well the variety did in 2008.) While the nose is fairly open right now, I find this to be holding back on the palate - it appears to be in need of three to five years to show its best.

(100% Pinot Meunier; Pure 2008 vintage; Three vineyards in Saint Martin d'Ablois planted in 1962, 1987, and 2001; Stainless steel and enamel lined tanks; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; \$55-70)

NV Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
80-82	80-82

Full-bodied and feisty, this wine is immediately aromatic and then grants a full mouthful of flavor. Bold, slightly peppery peach and powerful yeasty citrus set the stage for bright apple to take a turn around the mid-palate. My one complaint is that while the wine starts out big and burly, it not only steps it down, but exits the building entirely by the finish. Better balance and more staying power would make this a dynamite find, but this is tasty and a big step up from the so-so 2006-based version.

(15-20% Chardonnay, 5% Pinot Noir, 75-80% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 20% reserves from 2006; Saint Martin d'Ablois; Stainless steel and enamel lined tanks; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 7.5 g/L dosage - MCR; \$42-52)

2004 Didier-Ducos Millésime

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

A rich, toasty exuberant nose pulls you right in like a tractor beam. The palate has the same toasty richness, but is more expansive, filled with bright citrus and yeasty minerals. A very nice example, this Champagne plays with the sunny, bright fruit of 2004 and the full-bodied style of Didier-Ducos. What I like best about it is the smooth, creamy edge it gains with air and warmth. With a youthful, zesty finale, this is altogether pleasing, with elegance, richness, attitude, and a little zip.

(46% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 24% Pinot Meunier; Saint Martin d'Ablois; Stainless steel and enamel lined tanks; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 6.7 g/L dosage - MCR; \$55-65)

NV Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
88-90	88-90

This is essentially a 2008 vintage wine with some red wine blended into it, and its vintage character is the true star. Deliciously ripe berries with a classy elegance radiate through the nose and penetrate the palate. This wine manages to deftly balance three different personalities in an ever-changing kaleidoscope of fun: fruity berries, rich, doughy biscuits, and sleek, tart elegance. This is a terrific Rosé that is a great buy and deserves serious Champagne drinkers' attention.

(55% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 15% Pinot Meunier; 12% red wine addition where half is Pinot Noir and half is Pinot Meunier; Saint Martin d'Ablois; Stainless steel and enamel lined tanks for the white wine and oak barrels for the red wine addition; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged fall 2010; 6.7 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-55)

NV Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-88

Crisp, fresh, and full of bread, pear and apple on the nose, this is a great introduction to a basic northern Côte des Blancs Chardonnay. Still quite young, this sings with bright, 2008 fruit and sizzling, high-toned acidity. Citrus fruit, bread dough, apple, pear, and river stones all play together very nicely. Give this a couple of years and it will gain depth, but it is so darn tasty already that it will be hard to resist opening one now. This is perfect for those hot summer afternoons.

(100% Chardonnay; Lot 0009 - 2008 base with 2007 reserves; 50% Cuis, 25% Chouilly, 25% Cremant & Coteaux d'Epernay; Steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; 6-8 g/L dosage; Disgorged 2011; \$48-58 US)

NV Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	88-90

A clear step up from the basic Blanc de Blancs (which is a pretty darn good wine), this cuvée sports a wide variety of aromas and flavors typical of Cramant. Floral citrus, doughy apples, and bright, peachy minerality all play major roles. The addition of the oak-aged reserve wines has bestowed upon it a fuller figure, making it both a grownup wine that refreshes and one that can handle a fancy night out (that is, at the dinner table). Year after year this is one of the best values in Champagne, and the 2008-based release is top-notch.

(100% Chardonnay; Lot 09 - blend of 2008, 2007, and 2006; 30-50 year old vines in Cramant with a majority from the Les Pimonts vineyard; Steel fermentation; Reserve wines aged in old large 4000 L oak foudres before blending/bottling; Malolactic fermentation; 6-8 g/L dosage; Disgorged 2011; \$60-72 US)

A Brilliant and Stunning Fleur de Passion

2005 Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion

Rating	Potential
91-93	91-93

This remains bright, open, and is drinking better at seven years than I could ever have imagined a *Fleur de Passion* could. Even so, this has amazing concentration with a unique yeasty citrus extract that will keep this wine lively for years. Amazingly complex for the vintage, this is heads and tails above the norm from Cramant in 2005. On the palate bread, butter, sunny minerality, floral, juicy orange, and a touch of bitterness are all in full force. This wine may be the best 2005 I have tasted to date - it not only has the bright, rich, openness of the best wines of the vintage, it also clearly has from the stuffing to last. Just a fabulous wine - only the sensational 1996 vintage is better than this.

(100% Chardonnay; Cramant; 40+ year old vines; Aged in oak barrels; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; Dosage 6 g/L; \$100-150 US)

2002 Dom Pérignon Rosé

Rating	Potential
92-94	92-94

Showing beautiful already, this wine illustrates to a "t" what the vintage of 2002 is all about - vibrant, fruity, deep Pinot Noir. Red berries, tart citrus, and a hint of cream combine in a mouth-filling wine that is elegantly rich. I find this to be a bigger Rosé as far as *Dom Pérignon* goes, but it also has impeccable tension that pulls this wine taut with complexity and finesse. A super release that you can enjoy today or decades from now. This is due to be released in the late summer and early fall of 2012.

(Approximately 40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Noir of which 20% is red wine addition from Bouzy and Ay; Malolactic fermentation; Stainless steel; Disgorged late 2011; 7-9 g/L dosage; \$300-400 US)

A Great Example of What Could Be Done in 2003

2003 Dom Pérignon

Rating	Potential
90-92	91-93

Open and expressive on the nose, this wine encourages doughy, juicy orange and citrus blossom to leap from the glass. The palate is deliciously open, showcasing a bold creaminess with more orange flavor, but there is much more to this wine than simply instant gratification. While 2003 has been stereotyped as an overblown vintage best enjoyed here and now, this wine is likely to challenge these assumptions. Fresh, zesty minerals give the wine balance and structure. True, this is bigger, broader *Dom Pérignon*, but it has the requisite elegance of the legendary cuvée. Think of an athlete who can dominate with both size and speed - that is 2003 DP. Impressive and well made. Oh yes, and it will age well too and be just as good or better in a decade or two than it is today.

(40-50% Chardonnay, 50-60% Pinot Noir; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011 ~ 6 g/L dosage; \$120-165 US)

2004 Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Pure and bright, lemon and lime citrus starts on the nose and just keeps on going strong through the finish. This is very refreshing and almost too easy to drink, with floral, mineral, and light bread dough accents that blossom from the citrus core. As it warms up, heavy cream starts to appear. Not complex, not groundbreaking, but a very good value, this continues to overachieve every vintage. Drink it now for freshness or let it smooth out over the next decade.

(100% Chardonnay; All to almost all Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; \$40-60 US)

2002 Egly-Ouriet Millésime

Rating	Potential
88-90	88+

Attractive and forthcoming on the nose, this wine allows deep, bright orange and biscuit dough to leap from the glass. In the mouth, flavors of juicy orange, crisp red apple, spiced cream, and chocolate-covered biscuits come at you full bore. A few hints of yeast and tree nuts also show up, but this is a fruit-driven wine most assuredly. In fact, when it comes to fruit, this wine has put the pedal to metal and holds nothing back.

Frankly, I'm not used to my Egly giving so much so soon - what this means for the future, I am not quite sure. There is acidity and concentration, but not the amount I would like to see. I like the wine, but it could be called hedonistic. It marches right up to the cliff's edge overlooking the land of Unbalanced, Forced, and Clumsy Champagne, so I get nervous just watching it. My advice would be to enjoy this now and over the next five to eight years. After that you'll be in uncharted territory where anything can happen. If you like your Champagne amped up to "11" a la Spinal Tap, then score this a few points higher.

(30% Chardonnay, 70% Pinot Noir; Ambonnay; Oak fermentation and aging with 25% new oak; No malolactic fermentation; Bottled July 2003; Disgorged late 2011; \$130-200 US)

NV Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Ripe, fruity apples are met by toasty, doughy, biscuit on the palate. Sensational right now on its own or with food, this could handle anything from seafood to red meat. This will please fizz heads looking for complexity and depth as well as those who just want something tasty and easy to drink. No matter who the audience, the bottle will be emptied quickly.

(10% Chardonnay, 90% Pinot Noir; 2002 base vintage; Aÿ; Stainless steel; 6 g/L dosage; \$40-65 US)

NV René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Always so fresh, elegant, and lovely, this is a perfect example of the delicate, feminine style of Rosé. Soft, juicy red berries mix with floral notes and bright citrus. A tangy finish will leave you smiling and going back for another glass. An easy drinking, fun, and expressive wine.

(50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir co-macerated together; Pure 2009 vintage; Mix of steel and oak; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 1 g/L dosage-MCR; \$65-90 US)

2003 René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupte

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

This wine is in a very nice place right now - it has shed some of its baby fat and acquired an easy grace. A pleasing mix of honey, biscuit, orange, apple, cream and mineral swirls within the palate. Exceptionally balanced and a wonderful example of the 2003 vintage, this and other top wines from the year have softened since release. Great for drinking right now or storing for another decade.

(80% Chardonnay, 18% Pinot Noir, 2% Pinot Meunier; Fermented and aged in oak barrels; 42% of the wine underwent malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid-2007; 6 g/L dosage; \$60-80 US)

2006 René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

Meant to showcase a blend based on the best of Geoffroy's Chardonnay, this has a wonderful array of flavors that range from juicy, bright apple, to cream and spiced dough. It coats the mouth with a plush, luxurious feel and no one would ever guess the dosage is only 2 g/L. Another top-notch release of the perpetually tasty *Volupté*.

(80% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir; 94% oak foudre, 6% enamel tanks; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 2 g/L dosage - MCR; \$65-80 US)

2006 René Geoffroy Empriente

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-88

For this release, Jean-Baptiste Geoffroy's goal was to express the best wine possible using a majority of Pinot Noir grapes. Slightly spicy apple aromas draw you in and a gentle biscuit character laced with pear and apple jam make you want to stay. A bolder wine that goes well with food, this is a bit spicier than the *Volupté*.

(14% Chardonnay, 76% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Meunier; Mix of oak foudre and enamel tanks; 54% Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 4 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-65 US)

NV René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Apple and pear on the nose combined with the bready, lively citrus notes on the palate have formed a sturdy foundation on which to grow. Very pure and with excellent length, this is a top-notch non-vintage.

(21% Chardonnay, 42% Pinot Noir, 37% Pinot Meunier; 2008 base with 30% oak aged reserves from 2007 and 2006; Steel and enamel fermentation; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 5 g/L dosage - MCR; \$40-60 US)

NV Pierre Gimonnet Collection de Belles Annes

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Sweet orange, pear, and mineral all come out to play in this lively wine. Not overly complex or striving to be anything other than a good, solid non-vintage Blanc de Blancs, this will nevertheless bring a smile to your face. Essentially, this is a non-vintage version of the *Gastronome*.

(100% Chardonnay; 2006 base with 2005 reserve wines; 45% Chouilly, 19% Cramant, 20% Cuis, 16% Oger; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Lower pressure than normal - around 4 atm; Disgorged mid 2011; 7-8 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

2006 Pierre Gimonnet Cuvée Gastronome

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Toasty aromas are quite attractive on the nose. The palate reveals a cutting, bright citrus character that carries all the way through to the finish. A tasty, easy to enjoy wine, this unfortunately doesn't stand out from the pack.

(100% Chardonnay; 45% Chouilly, 19% Cramant, 20% Cuis, 16% Oger; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Lower pressure than normal - around 4 atm; Disgorged mid 2011; 7.5 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

2005 Pierre Gimonnet Fleuron

Rating	Potential
77-79	77-79

This is a disappointment that doesn't live up to past vintages or its price point. Spicy citrus and a hint of bread dough are nice, but a touch of weedy greenery combined with a rubbery, meaty character take this wine in a direction that you don't want to follow. These unattractive flavors are not over-powering and don't make the wine wholly unpalatable, but I certainly wouldn't recommend searching this out.

(100% Chardonnay; 45% Chouilly from 40+ year old vines in the Mont Aigu and Ronds Buissons vineyards, 23% Cramant from 40+ year old vines, 24% Cuis from the Croix-Blanche, Roualles, and Les Bourgs vineyards, 8% Oger; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2010; 6 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

2005 Pierre Gimonnet Paradoxe

Rating	Potential
85-87	86+

Very fragrant, this wine allows savory herbs, minerals, and citrus blossoms to combine in a mesmerizing nose. The palate is a bit more traditional, though still tasty with dark orange and honeyed bread dough. In the end, this wine is expressive, interesting, and, most importantly, tasty.

(34% Chardonnay from Chouilly, 66% Pinot Noir with half from Aÿ and half from Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

NV Pierre Gimonnet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

As with most of the 2008-based non-vintage wines, this is a stellar release. This Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs has brightness, juicy apple and orange fruit, lively acidity, and a compact core from which it will undoubtedly age gracefully over the years. Easily the most fun to drink wine of the current Gimonnet releases, I hope to consume a decent amount of these bottles over the course of this year.

(100% Chardonnay; 2008 base vintage with 13.3% 2007, 3.3% 2006, 7.5% 2005, 3.9% 2004 reserve wines that are actually the NV release based on that year; Cuis; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

2005 Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

A well made wine that plays with a sprightly dose of citrus, attractive doughy elements and a delectable hint of spice, this also has a slight greenness to it. I have no problem drinking this, but I expect more at this price level and from a Spécial Club wine. Given that the current non-vintage *Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs* is so good, I can't see a reason to go after this vintage of the *Spécial Club*.

(100% Chardonnay; 30% Chouilly from the Mont Aigu and Ronds Buissons vineyards, 57% Cramant with over half from vines planted in 1911 and 1913, 13% Cuis from the Croix-Blanche, Roualles, and Les Bourgs vineyards; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 6 g/L dosage; \$60-85 US)

NV Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

A fragrant nose of citrus blossoms starts this wine off on the right foot. The aromatics match the palate perfectly, with its soft, floral, creamy, and easy to drink disposition. Absolutely divine on a warm summer afternoon, this will let you relax and forget the worries of the day.

(100% Chardonnay; 2006 base vintage; Single vineyard in Bisseuil; Stainless steel, Malolactic fermentation; 9.6 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-65 US)

NV Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

A pronounced improvement compared to the same wine disgorged in 2010, this shows great depth of flavor and a fantastic, full-bodied character. Spicy red berries and a deep core of red-tinged citrus come together to make one of the best Henri Goutorbe Rosés I have had the pleasure of tasting.

(25-30% Chardonnay, 70-75% Pinot Noir, every now and then they add a dash of Pinot Meunier, 12-15% Red wine addition; 2007 base vintage; Aÿ; Red wine addition; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 9.6 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-65 US)

2004 Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
88-90	89-91

Pure Aÿ on the nose, this wine showcases berry, biscuit dough, and citrus. The palate is full of fruit and powerful, zesty minerality. This wine supplies the full spectrum of flavors, with citrus, blackberries, blueberries, and red apples creating a fleshy, tingling, elegant, yet full-bodied rainbow of style. Year after year, this is one of the best values in Champagne. This 2004 is tasty stuff that is highly recommended.

(30% Chardonnay, 70% Pinot Noir; Aÿ; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; \$60-85 US)

NV Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Carpe Diem is a sort of alternative label for Grongnet that produces Champagnes in what they call a more traditional and natural way: this includes the use of oak, no malolactic fermentation, low dosage, second fermentation under cork, and hand-tied string to hold in the cork (this is called "la ficèle" and is used in place of the more common "muselet" or wire cage). The wine shows wonderfully on the nose, with hints of honey, apple, spiced pear, and a nice touch of light, tart citrus. The palate doesn't function quite as contentedly, but is still tasty: juicy, maturing, yellow apples mix with tart, steely citrus, bitter minerality, and a hint of bread dough. Initially, the flavors spar a bit, but as the wine opens a middle ground is agreed upon. An excellent effort.

(60-70% Chardonnay, 10-20% Pinot Noir, 20% Pinot Meunier; Étoges; Fermented and aged in 33 hL used oak foudres; No malolactic fermentation; Second fermentation under cork; Disgorged mid 2011; \$55-65 US)

1999 Grongnet Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
82-84	-

Definitely showing some mature characteristics on the nose, where mellow, slightly sherried citrus is dominant. The palate coaxes lemon and orange to blend into cream Sherry and tart minerals. This wine was better on release (a few years ago) than it is today - the three grape varieties seem to have aged at different rates. The Chardonnay remains young and fresh, but the Pinot grapes are past peak; the end result is a tired wine that, while tasty, I would recommend drinking soon.

(60% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir; 20% Pinot Meunier; Étoges; \$75-125 US)

NV Gruet Brut Sélection

Rating	Potential
79-81	79-81

Extremely clean, this goes down like mineral water spiked with lemon and lime. And while that makes for a refreshing soft drink, it doesn't make for a very interesting Champagne. For the price this goes for in Europe (12-14 Euros) this wine over delivers, but I prefer to pay double for something with personality. This works best as an aperitif for a large crowd - it will be refreshing, bubbly, and the label says it's from Champagne. As an aside, the Gruet family who makes this Champagne in Buxeuil is not associated with the Gruet family associated with the Gruet et fils label, runs the co-operative in Bethon, and makes sparkling wines in New Mexico.

(20% Chardonnay, 70% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Meunier; Steel; Malolactic fermentation; \$20-35 US)

NV Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Fresh citrus, juicy apple slices, and hints of bread dough brighten the latest release of this wine. This is like sipping bottled sunshine that is as likely to bring a smile to your face as a laughing baby. Just a fun, fun wine - drink now or let it turn creamy over the next five or so years.

(100% Chardonnay; 2008 base vintage with 2007 reserves; Chouilly, and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 8-9 g/L dosage-MCR; \$45-55 US)

NV Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Reserve - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Orange-laced dough, lively citrus, and a touch of red apple coalesce inside what I consider to be a wine to drink both now and later. This sports a core of fruity, bitter citrus that promises to give it a long life. A great example of a non-vintage Champagne that delivers outstanding value.

(80% Pinot Noir from Avenay Val d'Or, Bisseuil, & Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, 20% Chardonnay from Chouilly; 2008 base vintage with 43% reserves from 2007 and 2006; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; Dosage 8 g/L-MCR; \$35-50 US)

2005 Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

At times over the past year I have questioned exactly where this wine is going, but I think it has finally found itself. It appears to be a round, creamy, less fruited wine when compared to the 2004 and 2006 versions. Doughy citrus, floral lime, and a hint of spiced cream all show quite well and the oak has integrated nicely over the last year. There is a vinous note in the mid-palate that has been fading since release. Some will find that it adds complexity; I think the wine improves as it disappears.

(50% Chardonnay from the Mont Aigu vineyard in Chouilly and the Justice vineyard in Oiry, 50% Pinot Noir from the Prunche vineyard in Aÿ; Oak fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 5 g/L dosage - MCR; \$95-120 US)

NV Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Bright red berry and tart citrus aromas entice you in. A palate composed of fresh raspberry, strawberry, and mineral is completed by a zippy, citrus finish. This is a very tasty, easy drinking, and forward Rosé that is impossible to dislike.

(47% Chardonnay, 43% Pinot Noir, Pinot Noir red wine addition; 2008 base vintage with 53% reserves from 2007; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; \$45-55 US)

NV Marc Hébrart Selection - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Slightly sweet floral aromas present themselves delicately on the nose before brushing the palate with summer scents. The mouth meets a healthy dose of citrus that is still softer and more subdued when compared to Hébrart's 2008-based blends. Most attractive are the bitter mineral notes on the finish that give this wine cut and vigor.

35% Chardonnay, 65% Pinot Noir - 2007 base wine with 38% reserves from 2006; Chouilly, Oiry, and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; Dosage 8 g/L-MCR; \$42-55 US)

2006 Marc Hébrart Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

This bright and fresh nose of citrus and minerality is very appealing. The palate is classically styled, with citrus, dough, and a hint of pear, followed by a zesty, fairly long finish. While I do not usually consider wines of Chouilly and Oiry to competently stand on their own, this example shows just how well they perform in a blend.

45% Chardonnay, 55% Pinot Noir - 2007 base wine with 38% reserves from 2006; Chouilly, Oiry, and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; Dosage 7 g/L-MCR; \$65-90 US)

NV Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige

Rating	Potential
79-81	79-81

Peach and pear on the nose introduce a palate of cream, yellow apple, more pear, and bread dough. Relaxing, and with satisfactory structure, it doesn't really speak to me. This is too down-the-middle and lacks expression, especially for its place in the Heidsieck & Co. Monopole range. It's hard to believe this is a few rungs up from the *Blue Top* and price-wise above the *Millésime* and *Blue Top Premier Cru* too. In fact, you could make a case that all of the wines just mentioned are better than this. As a positive, I do anticipate this turning nice and toasty with a few years in the cellar. This is available in France and parts of Europe, most commonly in large grocery store chains.

(20% Chardonnay; 70% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Meunier; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; \$35-50 US)

NV Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée

Rating	Potential
80-82	80-82

Available mainly in France and parts of Europe (especially in large grocery store chains), this wine is rounded, with a sweet earthiness and crisp, clean, juicy pear character. A touch of bitterness balances out the sweetness eventually. Essentially, if you were to cross the Heidsieck & Co. Monopole *NV Blue Top* (for the sweet earthy notes) and the *NV Blue Top Premier Cru* (for the clean, crisp pear character), you have a working facsimile. Perfectly acceptable for the price, I still have a hard time figuring out why they bother making it - it doesn't stand out from the Heidsieck & Co. Monopole wines that are globally distributed.

(10-20% Chardonnay; 65-75% Pinot Noir, 10-25% Pinot Meunier; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2010; \$22-26 US)

NV Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice

Rating	Potential
78-80	79-81

I am truly perplexed by the Heidsieck & Co. Monopole business model. Is their goal to make great Champagne, or is it to manufacture a plethora of European grocery store cuvées that all taste alike? They refuse to reveal any disgorgement or base vintage information on these grocery store wines. In fact, they prefer to deny their very existence, though I see them on shelves across the European continent. This particular wine is packaged in a diamond-dimpled bottle that resembles an unfortunate cross between the classic Heidsieck and Co. Monopole/Vranken *Diamant* style and the old Mumm *René Lalou* bottle. (I'm not sure why they didn't just reuse one of those actual packages, since they own the rights to each; instead some brilliant member of their marketing team came up with a hybrid that is truly visually awkward, but I digress...).

The wine tastes of red apple and peach mixed with a mushroom flavor and slightly bitter, earthy citrus. I prefer clean, crisp citrus myself, but the full body of the palate is nice enough. The mushroomy, earthy, bitter, sour elements are disappointing, however, and the end result is just plain unappetizing. Not my style and definitely not worth the price they are asking. In the end this is another boring Heidsieck and Co. Monopole cuvée the world doesn't need.

(20-30% Chardonnay; 70-80% Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; \$40-50 US)

2003 Henriot Millésime

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-88

As with most 2003s this is fairly open on the nose, which sports creamy, doughy citrus. It is also quite forward on the palate, where bright orange, vanilla, bread dough, and a hint of Honey Nut Cheerios® cavort unabashedly. Still, this is extracted at its core and maintains a rambunctious bitter, biting finish to even it all out. The almost seven years of lees-aging has given the wine both structure and balance. This is another example of a very enjoyable 2003 with the potential to age - just be aware that production was only 20-30% of a typical vintage release so it could be hard to find.

(Approximately 50-55% Chardonnay, 45-50% Pinot Noir; Stainless steel fermentation; Disgorged 2010; ~32,000 bottles produced; \$50-70 US)

NV Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release

Rating	Potential
79-81	79-81

Rather plain, this wine's entry is barely highlighted by light pear and apple. Nothing really stands out, but nothing offends either. This is easy to drink and neither shrill nor bitter, as some past releases have been. While this wine isn't something I would personally search out, it is going to please most in the crowd and is the best *Kirkland Champagne* produced to date. For the budget-minded shopper, this is something to consider for immediate consumption.

(Approximately 60% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 10% Pinot Meunier; Produced by Janisson for Costco; Fall 2011 release; Cote de Sezanne; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; \$18-25 US)

NV Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release

Rating	Potential
77-79	77-79

Soft strawberry on the nose leads into a slightly rough and bitter palate. There is quality here, proved by a soft punch of tart cherry and yeasty biscuit, but this wine doesn't convince me that it will ever smooth its jagged edges completely. Overall, this is not offensive, but it isn't something you'll ask for a second glass of. In the current Costco lineup, the *Brut* is the better choice.

(10% Chardonnay, 65% Pinot Noir, 125% Pinot Meunier; Produced by Janisson for Costco; Fall 2011 release; Red wine addition; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; \$23-30 US)

MV Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail

Rating	Potential
91-93	91-93

*** Updated Note from Issue 5 ***

Upon sampling this wine twice, once from a bottle that never left the winery and once from one that has been in my cellar for four years, I am happy to report that the bottles showed very similarly. Full of nutty cream, spiced citrus, apple, wheat, and some honeyed bread dough, this is drinking wonderfully right now. It still has plenty of life left to carry it forward for years, but it is hard not to enjoy immediately. While it has always been bold in style (even in its youth) it has rounded nicely since its initial release around four years ago.

(25-35% Chardonnay, 45-55% Pinot Noir, 15-20% Pinot Meunier; 1998 base vintage with reserve wines stretching back up to 15 years; Fermented in old barriques; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2006; \$110-180 US - purchased at retail and cellared by me)

MV Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery

Rating	Potential
91-93	91-93

This bottle was disgorged six years ago and has remained in the Krug cellars its entire life. As part of an internal project to observe the evolution of their *Grande Cuvée* over time, this wine goes by the code name "Richness" in the caves. Having now tasted it, I can say that it certainly lives up to its name, showing honey, cream, spicy orange, wheat bread, baked apples, and a hint of almond. Very easy going and impossible not to enjoy - this is a *Grande Cuvée* that is drinking well right now and will continue to do so for at least another twenty years.

(25-35% Chardonnay, 45-55% Pinot Noir, 15-20% Pinot Meunier; 2000 base vintage with reserves stretching back to 1988; Fermented in old barriques; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2006; \$110-180 US - From winery cellars)

MV Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base

Rating	Potential
90-92	91-93

Sampled directly from Krug's cellars, this 2001-based cuvée illustrates the importance of blending on the final wine. Even though 2001 was a terrible vintage, Krug was able to create a wine to carry the *Grande Cuvée* label with pride. It shows great finesse, with creamy citrus, vanilla, a hint of baking spice, and a smooth mouthfeel that finishes with a swath of bitter minerality. I believe this wine is mid-transformation between fading youth and sultry adulthood a mere decade away. It is very tasty and perfect for those who like their Krug with a more mineral edge (like the *1995 Krug Vintage*). Drink this now to catch the mineral vigor or hold for more nutty roundness. Internally at Krug, this wine is code-named "Savoir Fare".

(25-35% Chardonnay, 45-55% Pinot Noir, 15-20% Pinot Meunier; 2001 base vintage with reserves stretching back to 1990; Fermented in old barriques; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2007; \$110-180 US)

MV Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd

Rating	Potential
91-93	91-93

In Issue 12, I discussed aging non-vintage Champagnes. Shortly after the issue came out, I happened to be speaking with Olivier Krug, who pointed out that Krug's *Grande Cuvée* has always aged very well (in his opinion), and he wondered why it was left out from the featured tasting. The reason I didn't include it was its high price point (over \$100 USD), but I assured him I am in complete agreement in its aging ability. That conversation was still running through my head as I pulled this bottle, which was disgorged around fifteen years ago.

Brilliant aromas of citrus, apple, baking spice, cream, and toffee offer both complexity and easy enjoyment. While the aromatics belie the wine's maturity, the freshness of the citrus announces still-youthful vigor. The palate follows with a smooth, silky, creamy toffee middle coated by layers of roasted nuts and still more bright, tart citrus. The finish is long and wonderfully intense, with a zesty, slightly spicy citrus element that lingers long after the last sip. There is no way to stop at just one glass.

(25-35% Chardonnay, 45-55% Pinot Noir, 15-20% Pinot Meunier; Fermented in old oak barriques and then transferred to stainless steel tanks; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged second half of the 1990s; \$120-180 US)

NV Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

First comes a wonderful and expressive nose of ripe citrus touched by cherry blossoms, and that is just the beginning. In the mouth this is full of life and fruit. You just can't help but tap your feet to the symphony of elegant, toasty, doughy biscuit flavors and bright citrus. Year after year this represents an amazing value.

(80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay; 80% 2008 base vintage with 20% reserves from 2007; 30+ year old vines from Verzenay and Verzy; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 6 g/L dosage - MCR; \$50-65 US)

NV Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Soft, fruity strawberry greets you first, then ushers you closer to red citrus and bread dough. This has impressive length and cut on the palate, where it lingers long after the last refreshing sip. While I have occasionally found this wine to come across too soft and timid, the 2008 version is an expression-filled winner. A wonderful Rosé.

(100% Pinot Noir with 9-10% Pinot Noir still wine added; Pure 2008 vintage wine; Verzenay; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 4 g/L dosage - MCR; \$60-80 US)

The Wait for Lallement's First Vintage Wine Was Well Worth It

2006 Jean Lallement Millésime

Rating	Potential
88-90	89-91

Finally, after years of waiting, Jean Lallement has given us an official vintage wine and it does not disappoint. Brilliant aromas of zesty citrus and chalky minerality will get you to dive right in to a crystal clear pool of focused, precise, and expressive Champagne. On the palate, grapefruit is blended with bread dough, berry juice and citrus. Spectacular for drinking on its own or with seafood dishes, this is well worth searching out, especially if you are a fan of the rest of Lallement's range.

(80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay; Best vines from Verzenay; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 4 g/L dosage - MCR; \$65-90 US)

NV Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Compared to the basic *NV Brut*, the *Réserve Brut* possesses more richness and weight. It has the same wonderfully bright citrus and dough character, but adds a touch of orange liqueur. Tasty, but maybe a bit oafish when compared to its little brother, I'd rather see this comport itself more elegantly throughout the palate.

(80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay; 20% 2008 base vintage with 80% reserves from 2007; 60+ year old vines from Verzenay and Verzy; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 4 g/L dosage - MCR; \$60-80 US)

NV Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Minerals, red and green-skinned apple, lemon, and faint spring flowers highlight both the nose and palate of this tasty, finessed wine. There is a touch of rich, just-baked bread that give this wine a bit of heft. All in all, a very nice effort that delivers for the price and can be enjoyed on its own or with lighter dishes.

(100% Chardonnay; 70% from Aÿ and 30% from Avize and Cramant; 2007 base vintage; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$50-70 US)

NV Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Quite fruity on both the nose and palate, this wine offers pear, apple, and a healthy dose of lemon to go around. With time in the glass it gains richness and a touch of cream. This wine has good balance, is very well made, and is easy for anyone to enjoy.

(35% Chardonnay from Avize and Cramant; 65% Pinot Noir from Aÿ and Verzenay; 2008 base vintage; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2011; 9 g/L dosage; \$35-50 US)

NV Lallier Rosé - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

To me, this is the star of Lallier's non-vintage range. Easy to drink, but also well-structured, it displays ripe, bright citrus, a touch of berry, and creamy dough notes. The base vintage character shines on the finish as a pure, tart, mineral-laced red citrus character comes into play. Definitely worth a try if you haven't tasted this.

(20% Chardonnay, 80% Pinot Noir; Avize, Aÿ, Bouzy, and Mareuil-sur-Aÿ; Red wine addition; 2008 base vintage; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2011; 9-10 g/L dosage; \$45-60 US)

NV Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

A rugged nose of dark berry, red citrus, and dry biscuit tells you this wine isn't fooling around - it is all business and will kick the tail of anything or anybody that gets in its way. A dry and early-maturing citrus character greets the palate before tart red berry, salty mineral, and hard, cracked wheat biscuit bring some freshness back. Tasty, a bit on the wild side, it manages to deftly balance bracing dryness with natural fruitiness. I like this wine, although I find that it ages rather quickly and is best consumed within a year of disgorgement.

(30% Chardonnay from Avize and Cramant; 70% Pinot Noir from Aÿ; 2006 base vintage; Stainless steel; Aged under cork; Disgorged 2010; No dosage; \$55-80 US)

NV Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Alexandre Lenique is the high-end label of Pierry-based Michel Lenique. Alexandre is Michel's son and is responsible for making these wines while still actively participating with his father in creation of the Michel Lenique line.

This Rosé has class in spades, revealing ripe raspberry-citrus and spiced cherry in a spellbinding nose. Lively red citrus makes up the backbone, but cinnamon, cream, and bread dough all help to give this wine depth and flavor. Hard to find, this is a spectacular drink right here and now, though aging isn't going to hurt it.

(Blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier with Chardonnay dominant; Red wine addition; Côte de Blancs and Marne Valley; \$67-80 US)

NV Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004

Rating	Potential
86-88	87-89

Citrus, lemon blossoms and cream create a lovely, fragrant nose. The aromas carry through nicely to the palate, where a bright, lemon citrus backbone allows the creamy character to materialize more fully. Juicy concentration builds towards the back of the palate and leads into a fresh, mineral-laced finish. Tasty and a very nice representation of the vintage, this is a top-notch wine, although the price in the US is a bit high.

(100% Chardonnay; Pure 2004 vintage; Le Mesnil-sur-Oger; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2010; \$100-170 US)

2005 Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs

Rating	Potential
83-85	84-87

A soft nose of floral lemon and mineral comforts the senses, though the aromas are much more subdued than the usual Lilbert vintage wine. The flavors have a bit more intensity, but follow the same basic Lilbert path - clean citrus, minerality, and a hint of flowers and cream. Time will encourage further depth of expression, and while it is certainly enjoyable now, I feel this wine lacks the vigor I have come to expect from the producer's vintage wines. I am also frankly shocked to see the price of this bottle (in some places) at upwards of \$100 US. I thought it was a screaming value when previous vintages were under \$50, but the price increases in the last two years has been borderline ridiculous.

(100% Chardonnay; Cramant; Stainless steel; Disgorged 2011; 6-7 g/L dosage; \$65-100 US)

NV Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
82-84	83-85

This is a round, somewhat simple Blanc de Noirs that goes down easy with a twist of red apple, berry, and zesty minerality. A tart yeastiness can be found as well, yet, while this is certainly tasty, it lacks the depth of the rest of the Maily Grand Cru range. While I believe the village of Maily is an excellent source of Pinot Noir, I really think it does best when blended with a bit of something else (either with Pinot Noir from other villages, or with Chardonnay).

(100% Pinot Noir; 2006 base vintage with reserves from 2005 and 2004; Maily; Stainless steel fermentation with reserve wines seeing some oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$42-50 US)

NV Maily Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

Young, fresh, and zippy, this is a very enjoyable and expressive wine with more presence than most entry-level non-vintage Champagnes. The Chardonnay provides cut and sizzling citrus acidity, while the Pinot Noir offers zesty bitter notes and body to match the acidity. Give this thirty to sixty minutes to open up and it really hits its stride. This is the perfect wine to serve with light appetizers. A top-notch effort that really makes the best of the fabulous 2008 vintage. Color me a fan.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; Maily; 70% 2008 base vintage with 30% reserve wines from 1996, 2000-2007; Stainless steel fermentation with reserve wines stored in oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 10 g/L dosage; \$35-45 US)

NV Maily Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Very fresh and fragrant, red berries and citrus lead both the aromas and flavors. Raspberry lemonade is the first thing I think of when I taste this wine. This has lovely acidity and brightness complemented by a light, crisp body. Give this a couple years in the cellar and creamy dough flavors will appear, and a few more years will turn it biscuity. Well balanced and bound to please just about everyone, this is a first rate Rosé.

(10% Chardonnay, 90% Pinot Noir; Assemblage with the Pinot Noir being a saignée that is blended with Chardonnay; 2007 base vintage; Maily; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

1999 Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Creamy citrus and a hint of minerality comprise the wine's aromas, whereas the palate is a mishmash of citrus dominated by grapefruit. Pastry dough, stony minerals, and brightly floral lemon allow this Champagne to express the vintage beautifully. The wine has a layer of fluffy, fruity baby fat, but also a staunch mineral core. Really nice as an aperitif or with seafood, this Blanc de Blancs has quite a lot in common with that of Ruinart's. Both blend Montagne de Reims and Côte des Blancs Chardonnay, and their flavor profiles are quite similar.

(100% Chardonnay; Mailly and the Côte des Blancs - all Grand Cru; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 6 g/L dosage; 10,783 bottles produced; \$75-90 US)

NV Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Mailly Grand Cru chooses the grapes for this wine by looking for the vines that possess equal parts ripeness and acidity – the idea is to capture some natural fruitiness, but not at the expense of balance. I'd say they accomplished their goal. Firm, steely, bready, and mineral-laced...almost six years on the lees has done good things here. The biting red notes from the Pinot Noir give it an almost fervent, frothy energy. This is a textbook non-dosé in that it is fermented without any residual sweetness. If you are looking for a great wine to match with shellfish, especially in a butter sauce, look no further. Not one I would recommend aging, but who cares? This is good stuff right now.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; Mailly; 70% 2005 base vintage with reserve wines from 2004; Stainless steel fermentation with some reserve wines seeing oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; no dosage; \$42-50 US)

2005 Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime

Rating	Potential
81-83	81-83

Somewhat heavy on the nose, this allows dark, meaty, doughy aromas to take the stage. The palate livens things up a bit with red-tinged citrus acidity and some crisp minerality, but the muffled, heavy character cannot be hidden. With time the wine becomes more graceful, but I still wouldn't want to be its dance partner. I do think it is well suited for the dinner table due to its full-bodied nature. Still, this isn't one of Mailly's better vintage efforts and I don't think age will treat it kindly; it's just too oafish and one-dimensional.

(25% Chardonnay from the plots of Les Coutures, Les Crayats, and Les Roses, 75% Pinot Noir from the plots Les Barraquines, Les Chalois, Les Côtes, Les Godats, Les Longues Raies; Mailly; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$65-75 US)

Under-the-Radar and Worthy of Much, Much More Attention

2000 Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons

Rating	Potential
87-89	89-91

This is extremely elegant for a 2000 vintage wine - especially one that has such a high percentage of Pinot Noir. While many wines from this vintage allude to a dark, earthy nature, this is sleek, sophisticated, and graceful. Red citrus, ripe berries, yeast, and a pointed, bitter minerality combine in this top-notch Champagne that is zesty, tasty, and promises to improve over time. This is a fantastic representation of the capabilities of village Maily fruit which can stand toe to toe with the best Champagne has to offer.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; Best of the oldest plots with the youngest vines from 1938; Maily; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 6 g/L dosage; 11,788 bottles produced; \$95-110 US)

2007 Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-88

A superlative mix of bright, lemony minerality and crisp, tart red berries make for an enticing nose. Still quite young, tart, slightly bitter citrus is supported by a well-placed core. Currently, the delicious minerality is starting to show hints of orange and bread dough. Give this another three to five years and I expect it to round out nicely, but for fans of sleek, sophisticated, tart, red-kissed citrus and mineral-laced Champagne, this is delicious right now.

(40% Chardonnay from the plots of Les Coutures, Les Crayats, and Les Roses, 60% Pinot Noir from the plots Les Barraquines, Les Chalois, Les Côtes, Les Godats, Les Longues Raies; Maily; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 8 g/L dosage; 25,842 bottles produced; \$75-90 US)

NV A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionelle - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

This Champagne is always a treat, and the 2008-based release does not disappoint. Plenty of orange, peach, pear, and apple combine with a slightly sweet, creamy note to create a wonderful mouth feel. For the price, this is very hard to beat.

(90% Chardonnay; 10% Pinot Noir; 2008 base vintage with 20% 2007, 8% 2005, 12% 2004, and 8% 2000 reserve wines added; Villers-Marmery; Stainless steel fermentation; Partial malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$35-50 US)

NV A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Year after year, this excels as one of the top Demi-Sec Champagnes (although it is understood that the sweet Champagne market has entirely too few choices and even fewer well-made ones). Of course, sweet apricot, peach, and lemon aromas are the first thing that hit you when you stick your nose in the glass, but this is so much more than that. Bright, tart citrus makes for a lively core that balances out the sweetness so that apple, peach, and lime can enter with verve. When I reach for a Demi-Sec, this is often my choice.

(90% Chardonnay; 10% Pinot Noir; 2008 base vintage with 20% 2007, 8% 2005, 12% 2004, and 8% 2000 reserve wines added; Villers-Marmery; Stainless steel fermentation; Partial malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 33 g/L dosage; \$40-50 US)

NV A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006

Rating	Potential
87-89	88-90

A slight twist on the typical Spécial Club idea, this bottling highlights the single parcel Champs d'Enfer in Villers Marmery, which I happen to view as one of the best vineyards in all of Champagne. The wine delivers right from the start with arresting, powerful, fruity impact. Lime, orange, and mineral lead the way with a touch cream soon to follow. Despite being an Extra Brut, this is not overly dry, but a sharp, clean, precise and more mineral-driven version of Margaine.

(100% Chardonnay; Champs d'Enfer vineyard in Villers-Marmery - planted in 1921; 74% stainless steel, 26% used oak; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 4-5 g/L dosage; 1,000 bottles produced; \$60-85 US)

NV A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Fun, fruity, kissed by spiced berries, this wine also maintains good focus. There is a strong backbone of citrus from which strawberries, cherries, and spicy berry skins sprout. It isn't often you find a wine that can be opened and enjoyed for what it is without thinking or contemplated for the complexities which are buried deep within, but this one can go either way.

(80% Chardonnay; 20% Pinot Noir; Red Pinot Noir wine addition; Pure 2009 vintage; 80% Stainless steel, 20% used oak-Chardonnay only; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 11 g/L dosage; \$45-55 US)

2006 A. Margaine Spécial Club

Rating	Potential
89-91	90-92

Another winning *Spécial Club* from Margaine, this is vigorous and full of life. Creamy, floral citrus, zesty orange, a touch of bright minerality, and lemon-laced dough promise to taste even better in the future as they gain body and depth of expression.

(100% Chardonnay; Broccot, Champs d'Enfer and Charmois vineyards in Villers-Marmery; 80% stainless steel, 20% used oak; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 9 g/L dosage; \$65-85 US)

NV Cuvée Tendresse Jean Milan - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

The latest release of this wine is the same as the previous year's, except with one additional year of lees-aging and a slightly higher dosage (20 g/L vs. 18 g/L). It is also similar in comportment, with a yummy, cutting citrus backbone from which powdered sugar and honeyed oranges branch off. There is a touch of heaviness to the wine that threatens to muddy the mid-palate, but fresh acidity saves the day by the time the finish rolls around. An enjoyable, sweeter-styled experience.

(100% Chardonnay; 2007 base vintage with reserve wines from 2006; Oger; Stainless steel; Disgorged July 2010; 18 g/L dosage; \$50-60 US)

NV Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

This wine was disgorged over two years after the bottle that I reviewed in Issue 4 of this newsletter, and it was also given a higher dosage. I find it tasty, though I enjoyed the earlier disgorgement a bit more. While most releases of this wine are a touch too heavy, the latest release's extended lees-aging has made it even heavier (various disgorgements of this have been on the market for the past four years). Toast, juicy apple, and a full-bodied mouthfeel all are quite pleasurable and I like the wine, but a little bit more zip and zest would have really made this something special.

(100% Chardonnay; 2001 base with 2000 reserve wine; Oger; Oak; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$80-100 US)

2005 Jean Milan Symphorine

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

My current favorite of the Jean Milan lineup, this is fresh, lively, and vivacious. From the bright citrus blossoms on the nose to the juicy apples on the palate, this is packed to the gills with enjoyment. I don't see it getting any better or complex with cellar time, but that shouldn't matter since it is so tasty right now.

(100% Chardonnay; Oger; Stainless steel; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$75-95 US)

NV Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Aromas of red-tinged citrus and dark berries are appealing and quite a bit different from your typical Moët et Chandon non-vintage cuvée. In the mouth, this has an earthy elegance and a nice, bright bite of bitter citrus. Much more sleek and refined than the basic *Impérial* line, this wine has finesse, class, and good core fruit and acid kissed by minerality. All in all, a very good wine that I wish was easier to find (it is most often found in Asian and Australian duty free shops). Although I find the *NV Impérial* to be much improved and a wine finally worth drinking, this leaves it in the dust.

(15% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, 35% Pinot Meunier; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 13 g/L dosage; \$30-40 US)

David Pehu Does It Again!

NV Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
90-92	91-93

A spellbinding wine, this brings beautiful apple and citrus aromas to the table. The palate is quite lush, with juicy, fresh-from-the-orchard apples and bright lemon. It is very lively right now, but will age wonderfully for those who want more of a creamy, doughy character. If you open it today, enjoy the citrus and mineral lip-smacking goodness inside.

(100% Chardonnay; Pure 2008; Le Mesnil-sur-Oger; Stainless steel; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 9 g/L dosage; 5,000 bottles produced; \$50-70 US)

NV Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
89-91	90-92

An example of just how well Verzenay's crop turned out in 2008, this first reveals bright red apple on the nose and then launches the taster straight in to juicy blood orange, spiced dough, and apple medley. This has exceptional bite and structure which, combined with an underlying minerality, make for a wine that will drink well now and for years to come. David Pehu continues to amaze with his deft hand in the vineyards and winery.

(100% Pinot Noir; Pure 2008; Verzenay; 60% oak, 40% steel; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 8 g/L dosage; 5,000 bottles produced \$50-70 US)

2004 Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Medium-bodied, this wine reveals a gentle and charming awkwardness in its youth. Fairly open and forward, fat, juicy citrus has mixed with biscuit dough and ripe, ruby red grapefruit and bitter minerality. This is wide open and while a touch clunky, it is tasty. And though I expect time will certainly change it, I'm not sure it will improve. While not perfect, I love it for what it is - sometimes you're in the mood to taste a Champagne that takes the path less traveled.

(Slight majority Chardonnay with Pinot Noir; Grands and Premiers Crus; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; \$90-135 US)

2004 Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs

Rating	Potential
85-87	86-88

Offering an intricate aroma composed of cream, lemon blossom, sunshine and warmth, this wine will instantly bring a smile to your face. The palate is somewhat toned down but follows this same template, with plenty of creamy, bright lemon and a nice dose of minerality on a fresh, zippy finish. This is on the young side, but never becomes too tart or acidic. I find it to be an enjoyable, cream-kissed, zesty Chardonnay - you can enjoy now or give it five to ten years to acquire a toastier edge.

(100% Chardonnay; Bergères-les-Vertus; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$60-75 US)

Want to Experience the Best of Le Mesnil? Drink This.

2004 Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons

Rating	Potential
88-90	91-93

Pure lemon and stone aromas zoom right into a creamy body of citrus and slightly bitter bread dough. The wine is initially tight, but give it just a few minutes to breathe and it will burst forth with a blast of mouth-coating, concentrated citrus. While there is nothing wrong with drinking this now, a decade or two of cellaring will pay real dividends. This is right up there with the sensational *Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons* from 1995, 1996, and 2002.

(100% Chardonnay; Les Chétillons vineyard in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 4.7 g/L dosage - MCR; \$90-115 US)

2006 Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Bright lemon blossoms unfurl delicately on the nose and then morph into a creamy lemon meringue palate. There is also a vinous streak redolent of fresh-baked dough which rolls into a beautiful, slightly bitter and tart mineral finish. A wonderful effort that is drinking well today, this will age very nicely as well.

(100% Chardonnay; ; Avize, Cramant, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, Oger; Stainless steel fermentation; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; 5.3 g/L dosage - Liqueur; \$60-75 US)

2002 Pol Roger Vintage

Rating	Potential
89-91	90-92

Orange, cream, and a sharp, concentrated, bitter grapefruit note combine beautifully in this wine. Next, doughy notes embrace the palate before it tightens up around a tart and bitter mineral backbone from which this will undoubtedly grow. Some cream comes out again on the finish to leave you firmly convinced that you simply must have another glass. A wonderful release from Pol Roger and one that I highly recommend.

(40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Noir; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; 8 g/L dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Light in color for a Rosé, this wine appears gold with just a tinge of red. The nose is very attractive, offering soft, creamy, bread notes combined with banana and raspberry. The nose gives the impression that this will be a richer, mouth-coating, full-bodied wine, but the palate doesn't follow instructions. Instead, a gripping, tart red berry and citrus spine was given a kiss of minerality. Given time to breathe, it does gain a bit of creamy, spicy banana bread character, but it remains quite steely on the palate. Over time, I think this will soften a bit, but, at its peak, it will never lose its freshness. A very nice 2007 and a great first Rosé from M. Prevost.

Interestingly, the red wine was made from grapes grown by vines affected by court-noué (fanleaf virus). Court-Noué not only reduces the lifetime of the vine, it also reduces the grape yield and can lead to poor quality grapes at harvest so rigorous selection is necessary - it is quite a challenging way to make a Rosé.

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Red Pinot Meunier added to the Les Béguines; Pure 2007 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 40 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2009; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
85-88	85-88

More red in color than the 2007 and more red berry infused on the nose, this takes on a more typical Rosé profile. Seductive and alluring, the palate is full of bright, berry-filled minerality that is spiked with spice and tea leaf. The finish is crisp and clean, marked by a touch of tannin to create a unique profile. While I would love to see what this wine could become given a 7-8 g/L dosage, it is very enjoyable in its super-dry form. I do question where this will go with time, but for those who want an exceptional aperitif, this is a wine for you.

Like the 2007 edition of this wine, the red wine comes from vines affected by court-noué (fanleaf virus).

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Red Pinot Meunier added to the Les Béguines; Pure 2008 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 40 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2010; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Similar in nature to the white *Les Béguines* from 2009, this is clearly a product of the vintage with plenty of sunshine and easy-drinking enjoyment. Jérôme Prévost's wines probably aren't the first that come to mind when you're looking for something to drink by the pool on a summer afternoon, but this wine will surprise. There is a bright, spicy, raspberry note intertwined with crisp citrus, mineral, and spice cake that allows this wine to float effortlessly through the air. Drink this sooner rather than later – it's light, fruity character won't stay around for long.

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Red Pinot Meunier added to the Les Béguines; Pure 2009 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 40 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2011; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Jérôme Prévost La Closserie Les Béguines - pure 2007

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Always one of my favorite pure Pinot Meunier cuvée, this release stays true to form. This wine is impossible not to love from first sniff. Full of spicy, bready notes on the nose, it is touched by a tart, pure minerality. A medium-bodied palate features spiced peach, biscuit dough, mellow apple, and a bright, cutting acidity that brings energy and lift to the finish. Very enjoyable on its own and even more at home with poultry dishes, this is another terrific effort by Prevost.

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Pure 2007 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 40 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2009; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

The Best Wine I Have Had from Jérôme Prévost

NV Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008

Rating

Potential

87-89

88-91

Like past vintages of this wine, this version delivers a bready, spicy aroma, but as a bonus a dose of fresh citrus raises it a cut above. The palate shows similar freshness as it contributes a zesty, lively citrus and peach backbone from which honey, banana bread and mineral elements build. Light on its feet, yet strong in presence, this is one of Prevost's best efforts and should be even better in five to eight years. Two-thousand-and-eight was great for Pinot Meunier and this is a perfect example of the year's best.

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Pure 2008 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 50 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2010; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

Rating

Potential

NV Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009

86-88

86-88

This is probably the most open, forward, and brightly fruity *Prévost Les Béguines* I have tasted. While it has the signature baking spice and bread flavor, the blood orange citrus is what keeps your attention. There are some intense dough notes, a touch of banana, and a very appealing minerality, but the overall lightness makes this a wine that will appeal to just about everyone. For better or worse (depending on your viewpoint), this is much more a reflection on the 2009 vintage than the style of Jérôme Prévost.

(~100% Pinot Meunier - can have very small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, & Pinot Blanc in it; Pure 2009 vintage; Single vineyard - Les Beguines in Gueux; 50 year old vines; Fermented and aged for ~ 6 months in 450-600 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2011; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

Rating

Potential

NV Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base

85-87

86-88

Fruity and quite rich on the nose, honey and bread dough set a dominant tone. The palate dials it back a bit, simplified by a lovely, tart citrus core. Honeysuckle, cream, dough, and yellow apple combine in a well-rounded, easy-to-enjoy palate. The finish may be a bit abrupt, but that is me being nitpicky - this wine performs very well for the price and is easy to recommend.

(80% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir; 50% 2007 base vintage with the following reserves- 30% 2006, 15% 2005, 5% 2004; Trepail; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 11 g/L dosage - MCR; \$45-55 US)

Rating

Potential

NV Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base

88-90

88-90

Like all of the Pascal Redon wines this has wonderful, full-bodied aromas plus lively, youthful flavors. Creamy lemon and bread dough mix with bright citrus minerality and rich, slightly nutty yeast notes. A wine that is at home with richer fish dishes and creamy soups, this is a chewy Blanc de Blancs that retains an impressive core of brightness on the finish. Recommended – a wine to drink now and over the next five years.

(100% Chardonnay; 50% 2004 base vintage with the following reserves- 30% 2003, 15% 2002, 5% 2001; Trepail; 65% stainless steel, 35% oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 8 g/L dosage - MCR; \$55-65 US)

Whoop! There It Is!

Rating

Potential

NV Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base

90-92

90-92

Immediately upon opening this wine appears overly mature, but the musty bottle aromas blow off quickly to reveal a sexy, curvaceous Meyer lemon, cream, bread dough, mineral, and cashew- and almond-flavored wine. Full-bodied and generous on the palate, the finish is surprisingly taught, floating lightly across the tongue. While this possesses a healthy dose of citrus, it is not a wine to use as an aperitif, but rather one that excels at the dinner table. Mushrooms stuffed with pork, fancy cheese, and rare beef would all match marvelously. It is rare to find a Champagne with this much "oomph" in addition to such obvious grace and elegance - this is a special wine that deserves recognition.

(50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir; 50% 2004 base vintage with the following reserves- 30% 2003, 15% 2002, 5% 2001; Trepail; 90% stainless steel, 10% oak; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2010; 8 g/L dosage - MCR; \$65-75 US)

2005 Louis Roederer Cristal

Rating	Potential
90-92	90-92

Quite forward, open, and tasty already, this is a *Cristal* to drink now while you let your 2004s, 2002s, 1996s, and 1995s continue to rest. Cream, apple, bread dough, bright citrus, and a touch of bitterness all combine beautifully in a well balanced, easy drinking wine that is bound to appeal to one and all. Is it especially complex? No, but it is a very well made and a true success for the vintage. Even given its high price point, this is recommended and I commend Roederer on an overachieving vintage for *Cristal*.

(43% Chardonnay from Avize, Cramant, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, and Oger, 57% Pinot Noir from Aÿ, Mareuil-sur-Aÿ, Verzenay, and Verzy; Some of the wine saw oak fermentation/aging; Little to no malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2012; Dosage 7-9 g/L; \$190-250 US)

NV Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base

Rating	Potential
91-93	91-93

Rich, spicy, and full of citrus on the nose, a whiff of this is will stimulate the senses – and whether you are a Selosse fan or not, you cannot deny that its aroma is captivating. In the mouth, a bout of fresh, zesty, powerful, mineral-filled citrus spars lovingly with a nutty, spicy apple. Add in some dry toast and a fresh, invigorating finish and you have an incredibly satisfying wine that will twirl your innards up, down, and all around. Year after year this is not only one of my favorite wines from Selosse, but one of my favorite Champagnes from anywhere.

(100% Chardonnay; 1986-2002 Solera; Avize; Oak fermentation and aging; Wines stored in a stainless steel; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged October 2009; 3,000 bottles released each year; \$225-\$275 US)

2002 Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs

Rating	Potential
91-93	92+

A wonderful Chardonnay from 2002 - floral citrus aromas highlight the palate composed of intense, zesty, fruit. Orange, lime, lemon, honeysuckle, cream, apple, and a touch of unbaked dough have created a complex and flavor-packed palate. There is a deep richness to this wine, but before it overreaches, a soft, crisp, creamy finish lightens the mood. As good as this is now, it will only improve with time, so try to lose some in the cellar.

If you are interested in this wine, I wouldn't wait too long to purchase. Not only is the wine really, really good, but production is only half the normal volume, so supply will be uncharacteristically limited. Pre-orders for this wine are already in effect, although the official release is not scheduled until September of 2012.

(100% Chardonnay; 5-10% fermented and aged with a mix of new and used oak barrels; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 9 g/L dosage; \$150-190 US)

NV Varnier-Fannièrre Cuvée de Jean Fannièrre Origine - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
85-87	85-87

Bright, fruity, orange citrus shows through on both the nose and palate. Following this emerges a dose of clean and slightly zesty minerality. I find this to be well made and both less fruity and more mineral-driven than the basic *Grand Cru Brut*. Which you will prefer will depend on which of those characteristics you are looking for (and probably the mood you are in).

(100% Chardonnay; 2006 base with 60% 20054 reserve wines; 40% Avize, 40% Cramant, 20% Oger; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 3 g/L dosage; \$60-70 US)

NV Varnier-Fannièrre Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base

Rating	Potential
87-89	87-89

Fruity orange, deep lemon, whip cream and baking spice have created a tasty and expressive mix. Given air, some saffron appears on the nose which adds delightfully to its complexity. A perfect wine for shellfish and a top-notch release from this very special parcel in Avize.

(100% Chardonnay; 2006 base with 35% 2005 reserve wines; Single vineyard Clos du Grande Pere in Avize - 70+ year old vines; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 7 g/L dosage; \$60-75 US)

NV Varnier-Fanni re Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

A very good release of this cuvee, this simply explodes with fresh fruit. Tart pear, sweet citrus, and juicy apple dominate the palate and lead into a long, tart, mineral-kissed finish. This is bright from start to finish and shows great length and expression throughout. Highly recommended and a great introduction to what Varnier-Fanni re can do.

(100% Chardonnay; 70% 2008 base with 30% 2007 reserve wines; 1/3 each Avize, Cramant, Oger ; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 10 g/L dosage; \$50-60 US)

2005 Varnier-Fanni re Grand Vintage

Rating	Potential
70-72	70-72

This starts off on the right foot with delicious orange and pear, but quickly hollows out, losing its fruit, becoming quite earthy and, by the end, and ends up tasting almost oxidized. I had the same experience after tasting multiple bottles, so I can only wonder what happened to this wine. Dennis Varnier is a great vine grower and winemaker, but this is just not a wine I can recommend at any price.

(100% Chardonnay; Single vineyard Vaudon in Oger; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged February 2010; 7 g/L dosage; \$80-95 US)

NV Varnier-Fanni re Ros  - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
86-88	86-88

Lively red citrus zooms in right off the bat. Over time, berries approach the palate along with a creamy minerality. This wine is clearly Chardonnay-driven given the wine's more zesty, citrusy base. If you are looking for an elegant citrus and light, red berry Ros , this is a great choice.

(90% Chardonnay with equal parts from Avize, Cramant, Oger, 10% A  Pinot Noir red wine added; 2008 base with 40% 2007 and 20% 2006 reserve wines; Stainless steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2011; 10 g/L dosage; \$55-65 US)

NV Veuve Clicquot Cuv e  douard Werl 

Rating	Potential
85-87	86+

This cuv e is seen mostly in the Duty Free airport markets in Asia and Australia and is named for Madame Clicquot's business partner and extremely capable business developer. Besides being dosed higher than the *Brut Yellow Label* (it is dosed at the level of Sec), it has a higher percentage of reserve wines (over 40%) in the blend and is aged longer both pre- and post-disgorgement by a minimum of six to twelve additional months each. The result of these modifications is definitely positive and has created a tightly woven, easy-drinking wine... yummy as long as you don't mind some sweetness.

Honey, citrus, and bread dough on the nose lead into a sweet but smooth and well balanced palate. Bright orange, sweet cream, more dough, and sprightly zest all take turns building a wine of good body that is well matched to rich foods. While this wine is anything but dry, it comes off much more well-balanced than many Brut and Extra Brut Champagnes. I am impressed with this wine for two reasons: first, this illustrates that Clicquot is currently capable of making very good wines, and second, they may have the best hand in Champagne when it comes to creating sweeter styles. This wine has extremely long aging potential.

(28-33% Chardonnay; 50-55% Pinot Noir; 15-20% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with 40%+ reserve wines dating back a decade; Stainless steel fermentation & aging; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged mid 2008; \$35-45 US)

NV Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2007 base

Rating	Potential
84-86	85-87

This is the best young Clicquot non-vintage Brut that I can recall in years. Plenty of citrus spunk kicks this off and tart apple and pear join in soon after. Hints of cream and dough appear on the sidelines next to a smear of minerality. Releases of this wine have consistently improved over the past five years, and like the moon walk, this particular release has made a giant leap forward for Cliquot-kind. Say what you want about the brand and LVMH, this is a good bottle of bubbles and one that will age well. I see a bright, creamy, biscuity future ahead of it. I'd gladly take a glass of this any time.

(28-33% Chardonnay; 50-55% Pinot Noir; 15-20% Pinot Meunier; 2007 base vintage with reserve wines dating back a decade; Stainless steel fermentation & aging; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged early 2011; \$35-45 US)

NV Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008

Rating	Potential
74-76	74-76

This starts off crisply on the nose with dry citrus, but alongside comes a bit of Sherry and volatile acidity. The end result isn't necessarily offensive, but it is disjointed. On the palate things reverse, where Sherry and volatile acidity play the lead role and dry, mineral-infused citrus fight to get into the top spot. The wine does have a sturdy acidic spine and some delicious bright lime-orange notes, but the ugly parts are just too distracting. While this does get a bit better with an hour or two of air and is clearly made from quality raw material, it could be better. In fact I find this version truly surprising, since past vintages have not had either Sherry flavors or volatile acidity problems, yet both this and the *Fidèle* share a similar profile in their 2008 editions.

(100% Chardonnay; Pure 2008 vintage; Single vineyard - Biaunes in Buxierres-sur-Aube; Fermented in 400 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2010; Little to no dosage; \$65-90 US)

NV Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base

Rating	Potential
76-78	76-78

Salty Fino Sherry and a dose of volatile acidity on the nose don't exactly invite you in for a taste. Fortunately, with time to breathe, the palate takes on a sharp red citrus-berry edge that meshes well with the base of dry minerality. Even better, the citrus/berry flavor manages to relegate the oxidative and volatile acidity notes to the background. Still, it remains impossible to ignore these flaws, however slight. The finish is the best part of this wine, showing bright, tart, red-fruited minerality. While I am not recommending this, if you do happen to have a bottle, give it a couple hours to breathe and don't over chill it; this will allow the positive traits to shine and limit the impact of its weaker points.

(100% Pinot Noir; Based on the 2008 harvest; Vouette and Sorbee vineyards in Buxierres-sur-Aube; Fermented in 400 L oak barrels; Disgorged late 2010; Little to no dosage; \$50-75 US)

Sparkling Wine Tasting Notes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato	Spklnng Rosé	70-72	70-72	63
NV	Clos de la Brierie Pureté de Silex	Spklnng Blend	84-86	84-86	63
2010	Fattoria Colmone della Marea Il Ciarliero	Spklnng Red	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Domaine Gresser Crémant d'Alsace	Spklnng BdB	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Gruet Blanc de Noirs	Spklnng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
2011	Innocent Bystander Moscato	Spklnng Rosé	81-83	81-83	64
2009	Korbel Natural	Spklnng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
2008	Masia Can Tutusaus VallDolina Cava Reserva Brut Nature	Spklnng Blend	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non Dosé - 2010 base	Spklnng BdB	80-82	80-82	64

NV Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato

Rating	Potential
70-72	70-72

Wow, is this wine sweet. Just the nose alone may surprise you if you haven't read the label, with its thick, honeyed, apricot aromas. The palate, too, is very sugared, but also sports a rather incongruous tart, green acidity. It is almost like the winemaker intended to make this sparkler both too sweet and too tart at the same time. While not my cup of tea, this isn't altogether offensive and is the best of the Barefoot Bubbly line-up. I will warn you that it is very hard to drink any other wine after a taste of this, however - it really kills the palate.

(California, United States; Charmat method; \$6-13 US)

NV Clos de la Brierie Pureté de Silex

Rating	Potential
84-86	84-86

Citrus, honey, and a tiny spicy vegetal note come out on the nose. The palate is extremely smooth and full of fruit. Crisp, juicy apple and a touch of peach are followed happily by spice and minerality on a brilliant finish. Very enjoyable and certain to please, this is a wonderful value and is easy to recommend.

(20% Chardonnay, 50% Chenin Blanc, 30% Cabernet Franc; Loire Valley, France; Biodynamic; Steel; 9 g/L dosage; \$17-22 US)

2010 Fattoria Colmone della Marea Il Ciarliero

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

Fairly faint on the nose, there are discernible dark berry skin aromas. The palate is somewhat more elevated and expressive: dry blackberry is supported by a very lively acid. The finish is not lengthy, but very clean and whets the palate for more. Although it has a very subtle hint of sweetness, the wine comes across quite dry, and the light sparkle works very well. I can easily recommend this.

(100% Vernaccia di Serrapetrone; Marche, Italy; Stainless steel; Charmat Method; Bottled early 2011; \$15-25 US)

NV Domaine Gresser Crémant d'Alsace

Rating	Potential
83-85	83-85

Lovely, sweet, floral peach and pear energize this wine from within. There is also a touch of a waxy, fluffy citrus that differentiates this wine from a Champagne, but it doesn't detract - it just gives it personality, especially as it merges slowly into a somewhat tart, bright, and biting citrus finish. Crowd-pleasing and easy to drink, some may find the sweetness too cloying.

(60% Pinot Blanc, 40% Auxerrois; Alsace, France; Biodynamic; Steel; 7 g/L dosage; \$25-32 US)

NV Gruet Blanc de Noirs

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Ruby red grapefruit begins on the nose and carries through to the palate. Berry lemonade flavors enter next, followed by a touch of fluffy sweet cookie dough. As with most Gruets, this is supported by a steadfast acidity through the finish. This is very nice, well priced, and recommended for the money. It continues to be my favorite of the non-vintage Gruet range.

(25% Chardonnay, 75% Pinot Noir; Engle, Deming, and Lordsburg, New Mexico, USA; All stainless steel fermentation/aging; No malolactic fermentation; Disgorged 2011; 8-10 g/L dosage; \$12-17 US)

2011 Innocent Bystander Moscato

Rating	Potential
81-83	81-83

Light and sweet, this wine offers tart, acidic honey, peach and citrus. This is not quite as fragrant, sweet, or long as a Muscat d'Asti, but it displays more cut. Very refreshing and easy to drink, it doesn't stay around long enough on the palate to make much of an impression. I do give this credit for style in packaging, especially the half bottles - with the wine's pink color and crown cap closure it's an easy grab for an afternoon picnic. (As a side note, some restaurants and bars in Australia actually serve this on tap which I think is a great concept.)

Blend of Gordo Muscat, Black Muscat; Victoria, Australia; Stainless steel; \$20-\$25)

2009 Korbel Natural

Rating	Potential
82-84	82-84

Citrus, bread dough, and green apple aromas are crisp, fresh and inviting. The palate is lively, light, and full of bright granny smith apple. Citrus and a subtle touch of cream lie in wait for the perceptive taster. This doesn't have great length or complexity, but it is enjoyable. I notice some of California's sweet fluffiness, but the wine is fairly dry and easy to enjoy. For the price, this delivers and is consistently heads and tails above the rest of the Korbel range - just enjoy it young and fresh.

(35%Chardonnay, 65%Pinot Noir; Russian River Valley, Sonoma County, California, United States, Stainless Steel; Malolactic fermentation; Disgorged late 2011; 7.5 g/L dosage; 43,000 cases produced; \$12-18)

2008 Masia Can Tutusaus VallDolina Cava Reserva Brut Nature

Rating	Potential
80-82	80-82

To start, floral and citrus aromas are complimented by the scent of fresh toasted bread. This is quite dry on the palate, which sees a touch of light citrus, wheat, and minerality emerge. Very clean and easy to enjoy, the palate isn't quite as interesting as the nose would leave you to believe. This is still an excellent choice for fans of very dry sparkling wine. I suggest enjoying this soon after release as I don't see age improving it.

(27% Macabeu, 26% Parellada, 40% Xarel-lo, 7% Chardonnay; Garraf, Penedès, Catalunya, Spain; Stainless steel; Disgorged September 2011; No dosage, ~1 g/L of residual sugar; 34,970 bottles produced; \$18-25 US)

NV Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non Dosé - 2010 base

Rating	Potential
80-82	80-82

This joint project between Champagne Moutard, Patrick Piuze, and US importer Martine's Wines has a crisp, breadly, citrus nose that leads into a very dry palate. The flavors are toast, pear, mineral and musty orange. While this will appeal to fans of non-dosage wines, I need a bit more expression to keep me interested. (Aside: I wonder how a period of longer lees-aging would change this.) I would recommend drinking this within a year of disgorgement for maximum enjoyment. Also, please note that this is the non-dosage version of Moutard's *Crémant de Bourgogne Brut Tradition*.

(100% Chardonnay; 2010 base vintage; Chablis, Burgundy, France; Steel; bottled in early 2011; Disgorged late 2011; No dosage; \$22-32 US)

Issue Indexes and Performance Tables

The following pages contain a number of tables which organize/categorize and rank all of the wines reviewed in this issue. They also contain a selection of different tables which index and organize all of the wines reviewed in this newsletter.

Indexes for the Tasting Notes in This Issue

-	Vintage Champagne	<u>p. 66</u>
-	NV & MV Champagne	<u>p. 67</u>
-	Blanc de Blancs Champagne	<u>p. 70</u>
-	Blanc de Noirs Champagne	<u>p. 71</u>
-	Rosé Champagne	<u>p. 72</u>
-	Alphabetical Index of all wines	<u>p. 73</u>
-	Vintage Index of all wines	<u>p. 77</u>
-	Score/Rating Index of all wines	<u>p. 81</u>

For the Indexes, the following legends are used to specify the Wine Type:

- **Vintage** = Vintage Champagne
- **NV** = Non-Vintage Champagne
- **MV** = Multi-Vintage Champagne
- **Still** = Still wine from Champagne (that is sold as a still wine)
- **Vin Clair** = Champagne that has only gone through one fermentation thus far and is from the latest harvest or is the latest blend ready to be bottled
- **Reserve** = Champagne that has only gone through one fermentation and is being stored for use in future cuvées
- **Spkling/Sparkling** = non-Champagne sparkling wine
- **Ratafia/Liqueur** = Sweet fortified wine from Champagne region
- **BdB*** = Blanc de Blancs
- **BdN*** = Blanc de Noirs
- **Rosé*** = Rosé
- **Red** = Still Red Wine from Champagne

- *Please note that BdB, BdN, and Rosé can be combined with Vintage, NV, MV, or Sparkling to form a unique identifier (for example, NV Rosé or Sparkling BdB)*

Issue 14 Vintage Champagnes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebene	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites	Vintage Blend	83-85	83-85	36
2002	Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir	Vintage Blend	84-86	85-87	37
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Millésime	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	41
2004	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	88-90	41
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
2004	Didier-Ducos Millésime	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	42
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
2003	Dom Pérignon	Vintage Blend	90-92	91-93	44
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
2002	Egly-Ouriet Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	88+	44
2003	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Empreinte	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	45
2006	Pierre Gimonnet Cuvée Gastronom	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Paradoxe	Vintage Blend	85-87	86+	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2004	Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	47
1999	Grongnet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	82-84	-	47
2005	Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite	Vintage Blend	85-87	85-87	48
2006	Marc Hébrart Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	48
2003	Henriot Millésime	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	49
2009	Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"	Vintage Blend	NR	NR	20
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
2004	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	21
2005	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instatanée	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	21
1983	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	22
1996	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	85-87	87+	22
1999	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	83-85	85+	22
2006	Jean Lallement Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	51
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
2005	Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime	Vintage Blend	81-83	81-83	54
2000	Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons	Vintage Blend	87-89	89-91	54
2007	Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	54
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56
2004	Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine	Vintage Blend	86-88	86-88	57
2004	Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	57
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	89-91	89-91	13
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	86-89	86-89	13
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13

Issue 14 *Vintage Champagnes Continued*

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
2002	Pol Roger Vintage	Vintage Blend	89-91	90-92	57
2005	Louis Roederer Cristal	Vintage Blend	90-92	90-92	60
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
2005	Varnier-Fanniére Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61

Issue 14 Non and Multi Vintage Champagnes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
NV	Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
NV	Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004	NV Blend	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005	NV Blend	86-89	88-90	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	87-89	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Réserve - 2004 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdN	87-89	89-91	41
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	82-84	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdN	85-87	86-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
NV	Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	47
NV	Gruet Brut Sélection	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Selection - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	48
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice	NV Blend	78-80	79-81	49
NV	Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base	NV Blend	85-87	85+	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base	NV Blend	83-85	84-86	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	21
NV	Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	50
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base	MV Blend	90-92	91-93	50

Issue 14 Non and Multi Vintage Champagnes Continued

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	51
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdN	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	54
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
NV	Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdN	89-91	90-92	56
NV	Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	14
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base	NV Blend	90-92	90-92	59
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée de Jean Fannièr Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Cuvée Édouard Werlé	NV Blend	85-87	86+	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	61
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62

Issue 14 Blanc de Blancs Champagnes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2006	Pierre Gimonnet Cuvée Gastronom	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée de Jean Fannièr Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
2005	Varnier-Fannièr Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62

Issue 14 Blanc de Noirs Champagnes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	87-89	39
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdN	87-89	89-91	41
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdN	85-87	86-89	42
2011	Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villemommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdN	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdN	89-91	90-92	56
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62

Issue 14 Rosé Champagnes

Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61

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Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebene	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites	Vintage Blend	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato	SpkIng Rosé	70-72	70-72	63
NV	Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
2002	Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir	Vintage Blend	84-86	85-87	37
NV	Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004	NV Blend	88-90	88-90	37
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005	NV Blend	86-89	88-90	38
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	87-89	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Millésime	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Réserve - 2004 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
2002	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	41
2004	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	88-90	41
NV	Clos de la Brierie Pureté de Silex	SpkIng Blend	84-86	84-86	63
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdN	87-89	89-91	41
2010	Fattoria Colmone della Marea Il Ciarliero	SpkIng Red	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	82-84	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	42
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdN	85-87	86-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	42
2004	Didier-Ducos Millésime	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
2003	Dom Pérignon	Vintage Blend	90-92	91-93	44
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
2002	Egly-Ouriet Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	88+	44
NV	Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44

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2003	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Empreinte	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	45
NV	René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2006	Pierre Gimonnet Cuvée Gastronom	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Paradoxe	Vintage Blend	85-87	86+	46
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
2004	Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	47
NV	Domaine Gresser Crémant d'Alsace	Spkln BdB	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	47
1999	Grongnet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	82-84	-	47
NV	Gruet Blanc de Noirs	Spkln Blend	82-84	82-84	64
NV	Gruet Brut Sélection	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	48
2005	Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite	Vintage Blend	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Sélection - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	48
2006	Marc Hébrart Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	48
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice	NV Blend	78-80	79-81	49
2003	Henriot Millésime	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	49
2009	Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"	Vintage Blend	NR	NR	20
NV	Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base	NV Blend	85-87	85+	20
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base	NV Blend	83-85	84-86	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
2004	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantanée	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	21
2005	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantanée	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	21
1983	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	22
1996	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	85-87	87+	22
1999	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	83-85	85+	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villedommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24

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2011	Innocent Bystander Moscato	SpkIng Rosé	81-83	81-83	64
NV	Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	50
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
2009	Korbel Natural	SpkIng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base	MV Blend	90-92	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
2006	Jean Lallement Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	51
NV	Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	51
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdB	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	54
2005	Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime	Vintage Blend	81-83	81-83	54
2000	Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons	Vintage Blend	87-89	89-91	54
2007	Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	54
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
2008	Masia Can Tutusaus VallDolina Cava Reserva Brut Nature	SpkIng Blend	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56
NV	Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdB	89-91	90-92	56
2004	Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine	Vintage Blend	86-88	86-88	57
2004	Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	57
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	89-91	89-91	13
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	86-89	86-89	13
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
2002	Pol Roger Vintage	Vintage Blend	89-91	90-92	57
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58

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NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base	NV Blend	90-92	90-92	59
2005	Louis Roederer Cristal	Vintage Blend	90-92	90-92	60
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
NV	Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non Dosé - 2010 base	SpkIng BdB	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Varnier-Fannière Cuvée de Jean Fannière Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Varnier-Fannière Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Varnier-Fannière Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
2005	Varnier-Fannière Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61
NV	Varnier-Fannière Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Cuvée Édouard Werlé	NV Blend	85-87	86+	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	61
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62

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1983	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	22
1996	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	85-87	87+	22
1999	Grongnet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	82-84	-	47
1999	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	83-85	85+	22
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
2000	Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons	Vintage Blend	87-89	89-91	54
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	13
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13
2002	Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir	Vintage Blend	84-86	85-87	37
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	41
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
2002	Egly-Ouriet Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	88+	44
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	89-91	89-91	13
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15
2002	Pol Roger Vintage	Vintage Blend	89-91	90-92	57
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
2003	Dom Pérignon	Vintage Blend	90-92	91-93	44
2003	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2003	Henriot Millésime	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	49
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	86-89	86-89	13
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Millésime	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	40
2004	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	88-90	41
2004	Didier-Ducos Millésime	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	42
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
2004	Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	47
2004	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantané	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	21
2004	Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine	Vintage Blend	86-88	86-88	57
2004	Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	57
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2005	L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebene	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites	Vintage Blend	83-85	83-85	36
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
2005	Pierre Gimonet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
2005	Pierre Gimonet Paradoxe	Vintage Blend	85-87	86+	46
2005	Pierre Gimonet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite	Vintage Blend	85-87	85-87	48
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
2005	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantané	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	21
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
2005	Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime	Vintage Blend	81-83	81-83	54
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
2005	Louis Roederer Cristal	Vintage Blend	90-92	90-92	60
2005	Varnier-Fannièrre Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2006	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45

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2006	René Geoffroy Empreinte	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	45
2006	Pierre Gimonet Cuvée Gastronom	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2006	Marc Hébrart Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	48
2006	Jean Lallement Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	51
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espir	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
2007	Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	54
2008	Masia Can Tutusaus VallDolina Cava Reserva Brut Nature	SpkIng Blend	80-82	80-82	64
2009	Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"	Vintage Blend	NR	NR	20
2009	Korbel Natural	SpkIng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
2010	Fattoria Colmone della Marea Il Ciarliero	SpkIng Red	83-85	83-85	63
2011	Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villemommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Innocent Bystander Moscato	SpkIng Rosé	81-83	81-83	64
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base	MV Blend	90-92	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	51
NV	L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
NV	Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato	SpkIng Rosé	70-72	70-72	63
NV	Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
NV	Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004	NV Blend	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005	NV Blend	86-89	88-90	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	87-89	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	39
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balancs d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Réserve - 2004 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
NV	Clos de la Briderie Pureté de Silex	SpkIng Blend	84-86	84-86	63
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdN	87-89	89-91	41
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	82-84	41

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NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdN	85-87	86-89	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	42
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
NV	Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimonet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Domaine Gresser Crémant d'Alsace	SpkIng BdB	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	47
NV	Gruet Blanc de Noirs	SpkIng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
NV	Gruet Brut Sélection	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Sélection - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	48
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	49
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice	NV Blend	78-80	79-81	49
NV	Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base	NV Blend	85-87	85+	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base	NV Blend	83-85	84-86	20
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	21
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	21
NV	Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	50
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
NV	Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	51
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdN	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	54
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
NV	Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdN	89-91	90-92	56
NV	Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	14

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Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	14
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closserie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closserie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closserie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	86-88	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base	NV Blend	90-92	90-92	59
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
NV	Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non Dosé - 2010 base	SpkIng BdB	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Varnier-Fannière Cuvée de Jean Fannière Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Varnier-Fannière Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Varnier-Fannière Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Varnier-Fannière Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Cuvée Édouard Werlé	NV Blend	85-87	86+	61
NV	Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	61
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62

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Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2002	Dom Pérignon Rosé	Vintage Rosé	92-94	92-94	43
2002	Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	91-93	92+	60
2005	Diebolt-Vallois Fleur de Passion	Vintage BdB	91-93	91-93	43
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; retail	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2000 base; winery	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	50
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - late 90s dgd	MV Blend	91-93	91-93	51
NV	Jacques Selosse Substance - 2002 base	NV BdB	91-93	91-93	60
2003	Dom Pérignon	Vintage Blend	90-92	91-93	44
MV	Krug Grande Cuvée - 2001 base	MV Blend	90-92	91-93	50
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2008	NV BdB	90-92	91-93	56
2006	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	38
2002	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	40
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	90-92	90-92	14
2002	Philipponnat Sublime Réserve Sec	Vintage BdB	90-92	90-92	15
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée du Hordon - 2004 base	NV Blend	90-92	90-92	59
2005	Louis Roederer Cristal	Vintage Blend	90-92	90-92	60
2006	A. Margaine Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	89-91	90-92	55
NV	Pehu-Simonet Blanc de Noirs - pure 2008	NV BdN	89-91	90-92	56
2002	Pol Roger Vintage	Vintage Blend	89-91	90-92	57
2007	Cédric Bouchard Creux d'Enfer Rosé de Saignée	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	38
2002	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	89-91	89-91	13
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	89-91	89-91	13
2004	Pierre Péters Blanc de Blancs Cuvée Spéciale Les Chétillons	Vintage BdB	88-90	91-93	57
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Fiacre	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	39
2004	Henri Goutorbe Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	47
2006	Jean Lallement Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	89-91	51
NV	Bernardin Cuvée Symphonie - pure 2004	NV Blend	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Rosé - 2009 base	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	37
NV	Didier-Ducos Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	88-90	88-90	43
NV	Pascal Redon Cuvée Diaphane Blanc de Blancs - 2004 base	NV BdB	88-90	88-90	59
2002	Egly-Ouriet Millésime	Vintage Blend	88-90	88+	44
NV	André Clouet 1911 - cuvée 26	NV BdN	87-89	89-91	41
2000	Mailly Grand Cru Les Échansons	Vintage Blend	87-89	89-91	54
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2008	NV BdN	87-89	88-91	59
2004	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	88-90	41
2003	Deutz Amour de Detuz Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	87-89	88-90	42
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs Prestige - 2008 base	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	43
NV	A. Margaine Extra Brut - pure 2006	NV BdB	87-89	88-90	55
NV	Henri Billiot Brut Réserve - 2009 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	37
2004	Didier-Ducos Millésime	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	42
NV	Gatinois Brut Réserve - 2002 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	44
NV	René Geoffroy Blanc de Rose - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	44
2006	Marc Hébrart Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	48
1983	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	22
NV	Jean Lallement Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	51
NV	Jean Lallement Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	51
2005	Jean Milan Symphorine	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	56
2000	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	87-89	87-89	13
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522" Rosé	Vintage Rosé	87-89	87-89	14
2005	Philipponnat Grand Blanc	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	14
NV	Philipponnat Réserve Rosée - 2007 base	NV Blend	87-89	87-89	14
2006	Pierre Péters L'Espirit Millésime	Vintage BdB	87-89	87-89	57
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	87-89	87-89	58
NV	Varnier-Fannièr Cuvée St. Denis - 2006 base	NV BdB	87-89	87-89	60
NV	Henri Billiot Cuvée Julie - pure 2005	NV Blend	86-89	88-90	38

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Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
2003	Philipponnat Cuvée "1522"	Vintage Blend	86-89	86-89	13
NV	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne Les Ursules - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	87-89	39
2004	Chartogne-Taillet Millésime	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	40
2002	Gaston Chiquet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	41
2003	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
2006	René Geoffroy Cuvée Volupté	Vintage Blend	86-88	87-89	45
NV	Alexandre Lenique Secret de Famille - pure 2004	NV BdB	86-88	87-89	53
NV	L. Aubry Brut Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	35
2004	Bernardin Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	37
2004	Bollinger Grande Année Rosé	Vintage Rosé	86-88	86-88	38
NV	Cédric Bouchard Inflorescence Val Vilaine - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	38
2004	Duval-Leroy Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	44
NV	Henri Goutorbe Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	47
NV	Marc Hébrart Cuvée de Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	48
NV	Lallier Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
NV	Alexandre Lenique Cuvée Excellence Rosé	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	52
1999	Mailly Grand Cru Exception Blanche	Vintage BdB	86-88	86-88	54
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Cuvée Traditionnelle Demi-Sec - 2008 base	NV Blend	86-88	86-88	55
NV	A. Margaine Rosé - pure 2009	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	55
NV	Jean Milan Grand Réserve 1864 - 2001 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	56
2004	Joseph Perrier Cuvée Joséphine	Vintage Blend	86-88	86-88	57
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2007	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2007	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	58
NV	Jérôme Prévost La Closerie Les Béguines - pure 2009	NV BdN	86-88	86-88	59
NV	Varnier-Fannièrre Grand Cru Brut - 2008 base	NV BdB	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Varnier-Fannièrre Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	86-88	86-88	61
NV	Jérôme Prévost Fac-Simile Rosé - pure 2008	NV Rosé	85-88	85-88	58
1996	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	85-87	87+	22
NV	Didier-Ducos Absolu Meunier - pure 2008	NV BdN	85-87	86-89	42
2006	René Geoffroy Empreinte	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	45
2003	Henriot Millésime	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	49
2004	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantanée	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	21
2007	Mailly Grand Cru L'Intemporelle	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	54
2004	Perrot-Batteux Cuvée Helix Blanc de Blancs	Vintage Blend	85-87	86-88	57
NV	Pascal Redon Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	86-88	59
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Paradoxe	Vintage Blend	85-87	86+	46
NV	Veuve Clicquot Cuvée Édouard Werlé	NV Blend	85-87	86+	61
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Rubis	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	36
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Les Rosés - pure 2007	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	41
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Harmonie Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	42
NV	Pierre Gimonnet Premier Cru Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Pierre Gimonnet Spécial Club	Vintage BdB	85-87	85-87	46
NV	Henri Goutorbe Blanc de Blancs - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	46
2005	Marc Hébrart Rive Gauche-Rive Droite	Vintage Blend	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Marc Hébrart Rosé - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	48
NV	Huré Frères Brut Rosé L'insouciance - 2008 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	21
NV	Jean Lallement Réserve Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	51
NV	Lallier Blanc de Blancs - 2007 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	52
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Rosé - 2007 base	NV Rosé	85-87	85-87	53
NV	Moët et Chandon Réserve Impériale	NV Blend	85-87	85-87	56
NV	Varnier-Fannièrre Cuvée de Jean Fannièrre Origine - 2006 base	NV BdB	85-87	85-87	60
NV	Huré Frères "New Wine" - 2009 base	NV Blend	85-87	85+	20

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Vintage	Wine	Type	Rating	Potential	Page
NV	Diebolt-Vallois Blanc de Blancs - 2008 base	NV BdB	84-86	85-88	43
2004	Adam-Jaeger Blanc de Blancs Millésime	Vintage BdB	84-86	85-87	35
NV	L. Aubry Brut - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	35
2002	Louis Barthélémy Brut Saphir	Vintage Blend	84-86	85-87	37
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Blanc de Blancs - pure 2005	NV BdB	84-86	85-87	39
NV	Marc Hébrart Selection - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	48
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Brut Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	53
NV	Philipponnat Royale Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	14
NV	Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	85-87	61
2006	L. Aubry Cuvée Nicolas François Aubry Sablé Rosé	Vintage Rosé	84-86	84-86	35
2005	L. Aubry Ivorie et Ebène	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	35
NV	Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Sainte Anne - 2007 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	39
NV	Gaston Chiquet Blanc de Balances d'Aÿ - pure 2007	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Gaston Chiquet Cuvée de Réserve - 2004 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	40
NV	Clos de la Briderie Pureté de Silex	Spkng Blend	84-86	84-86	63
NV	René Geoffroy Expression - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Pierre Gimmonnet Collection de Belles Annes	NV BdB	84-86	84-86	45
2006	Pierre Gimmonnet Cuvée Gastronom	Vintage BdB	84-86	84-86	45
NV	Grongnet Carpe Diem Extra Brut	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	47
2005	Huré Frères Brut Sélection L'instantané	Vintage Blend	84-86	84-86	21
NV	Lallier Grande Réserve - 2008 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Lallier Zéro Dosage - 2006 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	52
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Extra Brut - 2005 base	NV Blend	84-86	84-86	54
NV	Jacques Copinet Brut Rosé	NV Rosé	83-86	83-86	41
1999	Huré Frères Terre Natale	Vintage Blend	83-85	85+	22
2005	Lilbert-Fils Blanc de Blancs	Vintage BdB	83-85	84-87	53
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2008 base	NV Blend	83-85	84-86	20
2005	L. Aubry La Nombre d'Or Campanae Veteres Vites	Vintage Blend	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Baron-Fuenté Rosé Dolorés - 2006 base	NV Rosé	83-85	83-85	36
NV	Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition - 2007 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	40
2010	Fattoria Colmone della Marea Il Ciarliero	Spkng Red	83-85	83-85	63
NV	Domaine Gresser Crémant d'Alsace	Spkng BdB	83-85	83-85	63
2005	Huré Frères Blanc des Blancs L'inattendue	Vintage BdB	83-85	83-85	20
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	83-85	83-85	21
2007	Cédric Bouchard Roses de Jeanne La Haute Lemblé	Vintage BdB	82-84	83-85	39
NV	Mailly Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs - 2006 base	NV BdB	82-84	83-85	53
NV	Baron-Fuenté Grande Réserve - 2006 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Louis Barthélémy Brut Améthyste	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	36
NV	Gruet Blanc de Noirs	Spkng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
NV	Huré Frères Brut Réserve L'invitation - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	20
NV	Huré Frères Extra Brut Réserve - 2007 base	NV Blend	82-84	82-84	21
2009	Korbel Natural	Spkng Blend	82-84	82-84	64
NV	Jean Milan Cuvée Tendresse - 2007 base	NV BdB	82-84	82-84	55
1999	Grongnet Spécial Club	Vintage Blend	82-84	-	47
2011	Innocent Bystander Moscato	Spkng Rosé	81-83	81-83	64
2005	Mailly Grand Cru l'air Millésime	Vintage Blend	81-83	81-83	54
NV	Francis Cossy Cuvée Eclat Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	82-84	41
NV	Didier-Ducos Brut - 2007 base	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	42
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Grande Cuvée	NV Blend	80-82	80-82	49
2008	Masia Can Tutusaus VallDolina Cava Reserva Brut Nature	Spkng Blend	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non Dosé - 2010 base	Spkng BdB	80-82	80-82	64
NV	Gruet Brut Sélection	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	47
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Prestige	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	49
NV	Kirkland Brut - fall 2011 release	NV Blend	79-81	79-81	50
NV	Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Impératrice	NV Blend	78-80	79-81	49

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2005	Pierre Gimmonnet Fleuron	Vintage BdB	77-79	77-79	46
NV	Kirkland Rosé - fall 2011 release	NV Rosé	77-79	77-79	50
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Fidèle - 2008 base	NV BdN	76-78	76-78	62
NV	Vouette et Sorbee Blanc d'Argile - pure 2008	NV BdB	74-76	74-76	62
NV	Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato	Spkng Rosé	70-72	70-72	63
2005	Varnier-Fannièrè Grand Vintage	Vintage BdB	70-72	70-72	61
2009	Huré Frères "Lazy Winemaker"	Vintage Blend	NR	NR	20
2011	Huré Frères Ludes La Pert Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	22
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Les Sante Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier 25 yr old vines Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Enamel Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Meunier Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Large Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	23
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 1 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Ludes Pinot Noir Week 2 Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Rilly la Montagne Chardonnay Oak Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villedommange Pinot Noir Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdN	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Villers-Marmery Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24
2011	Huré Frères Vitry-le-François Chardonnay Vin Clair	Vin Clair BdB	NR	NR	24

A Taste of What's Coming in Issue 15

- The Top Values in Champagne and Sparkling Wine
- Righting the Ship at Lanson
- Philippe Gonet – A Jewel in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger
- Talking about Biodynamics
- Doyard, Marie Courtin, Lassaigne, Pierre Péters, and more!

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Would You Like to Have Your Wine Reviewed?

Would you like to have your Champagne or sparkling wine reviewed in Champagne Warrior? While The Champagne Warrior makes its best efforts to try to review every bottle possible, you can help out, by putting a bottle in the Warrior's hands. Samples can be sent to: Brad Baker, 47519 Halyard Dr., Plymouth MI, 48170. If possible, please include a detailed technical sheet including as much information on the wine as you can. This information can include grape varieties, grape origins/vineyard locations, years in the blend, fermentation and aging methods, disgorgement date, dosage, retail price, and any other information you feel is relevant. For more information, please contact The Champagne Warrior at: reviews@champagnewarrior.com