

# CHAMPAGNE

Champagnes can be very difficult to understand. The top twenty or so are the Grandes Marques, many of which have very well known names – Bollinger, Moët et Chandon, Veuve Clicquot etc. are examples. But they make such a variety of wines under those names –

- Prestige Cuvées** Particular top quality wines made in small quantities that producers make their No. 1 product  
– examples such as Cristal, Dom Perignon and Belle Epoque.
- Vintage** 100% from a particular year.
- Non Vintage** Wines from various years blended to present a consistent style.
- Brut** The most popular dry style of champagne.
- Rosé** Made by leaving the skins of the two black grapes which are in most champagnes in contact with the wine.
- Demi-Sec** Sweeter than Brut and underrated.

What all these wines have in common along with any bottles with Champagne on the label is that they must be produced by the ‘methode champenoise’ from grapes grown in the delineated Champagne area around Reims and Epernay in North-East France. Briefly, the grapes are fermented en masse, sometimes in oak, then blended. Some Champagne houses may use 70 different base wines to create their non-vintage wine. The wine is bottled and sugar, selected yeasts and a filtering agent added. This promotes the secondary fermentation which may take months. The average bottle of champagne will end up with about 250 million bubbles in it. Only with champagne does the process called ‘remuage’ take place. This helps clarify the wine by turning the bottle upside down for eight weeks and removing the sediment by freezing the neck then topping up the bottle. Not the cheapest process ever invented.

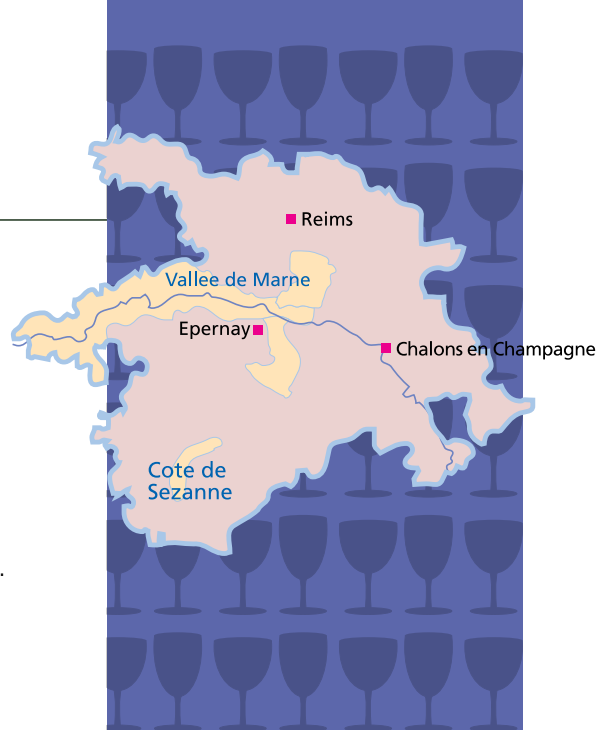
## WHY ARE SOME MARQUES GRANDES?

Literally Grande Marque means ‘Famous Brand’. Not surprisingly, the qualification tends to be based on history. There are about 300 Champagne houses and co-operatives marketing their wines mostly for the domestic market. The Champagne houses use their own vineyards but buy a considerable amount of extra grapes from small growers. There was an Association of Grandes Marques de Champagne but it was disbanded in 1997.

The following houses are now considered Grandes Marques by most commentators:-

|                  |                   |                 |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Billecart-Salmon | Bollinger         | Gosset          |
| Gratien          | Charles Heidsieck | Piper Heidsieck |
| Jacquesson       | Krug              | Lanson          |
| Laurent Perrier  | Mercier           | Moët & Chandon  |
| Mumm             | Perrier-Jouët     | Pol Roger       |
| Pommery          | Roederer          | Ruinart         |
| Salon            | Taittinger        | Veuve Clicquot  |
| Vilmart          |                   |                 |

Twenty two only of the 300 making Champagnes of very different styles – some full and meaty, some light and elegant but all consistently very high quality.



## HOUSE CHAMPAGNES

We have chosen three ranges of Champagne which we have specially selected for their freshness, balance, consistency and value. Well worth considering.

### ££ VEUVE RICOTTEAU

Despite credit crunches, recessions and adverse currency movements, U.K. champagne imports remain very high. However there has been more growth in House Champagne sales than in most Grandes Marques. Our Veuve Ricotteau Brut and Rosé champagnes have only had duty increases on the price since we first listed them. Accordingly sales have more than tripled.

#### Veuve Ricotteau Brut NV

Light and refreshing with a full apple flavour.

1

£13.67

#### Veuve Ricotteau Rosé NV

The nose has hints of ripe summer fruits with subtle hints of spice. The taste is soft and creamy with red fruit flavours and a long elegant finish.

1A

£15.12



### ££ PIERRE MIGNON

We introduced the Pierre Mignon wines last year with great success. Like so many of our Wine Selection, the firm remains family owned. They produce champagnes made in the purest tradition and concentrate on a delicate pressing and slow fermentation with a longer than average ageing period. Pierre Mignon may not be the biggest of houses but regularly wins awards in international competitions.

#### Pierre Mignon Grand Reserve Brut NV

This family-owned Champagne house is well-known in France for its quality control and attention to detail in the production of a stylish NV Brut with a vibrant, fresh character and soft creamy texture.

37.5cl bottle

1

£15.95

#### Pierre Mignon Grand Reserve Rosé NV

Carefully chosen for its combination of fruit and finesse so that it combines depth of flavour with refreshing elegance.

37.5cl bottle

1A

£17.50

£9.99



### MONTAUDON

The influential Wine Spectator magazine scored the Montaudon Reserve Premier Brut first at a tasting which included most major champagne houses' non-vintage wines. This left Roederer, Pol Roger and Moët behind.

The wines are noted for their more full-bodied and toasty style. Demi-Sec is effectively a medium dry Champagne and can prove popular with customers looking to avoid a bone dry finish.

#### Montaudon Reserve Premier Brut NV

Full flavours and a long aftertaste.

37.5cl bottle

1

£18.97

£11.05

#### Montaudon Demi-Sec NV

Extremely well made. Refreshing acidity with a deliciously light, tangy aftertaste.

3

£18.97

#### Montaudon La Grande Rosé Brut NV

Lively and spicy redcurrant taste.

1A

£21.49



## VINTAGE CHAMPAGNES



### Moët et Chandon 2000

Moët et Chandon Vintage Champagne has very much more developed biscuit flavours than the NV.

Taste  
Guide

Trade  
Sales Price

1

£31.53



### Bollinger La Grande Année 1997

Mostly made from Pinot Noir which generally gives the wine that full-bodied flavour.

1

£44.59



### Billecart-Salmon Cuvée NFB 1996

A palate piled high with fruit balanced by excellent acidity to ensure that it lasts for a long time.

1

£45.89

### Billecart-Salmon Blanc de Blancs Brut 1998

This retains Billecart's exceptional creaminess with great freshness and developed nutty and toasty overtones. Twice voted the best Champagne served on first class airlines.

1

£53.20



### Taittinger Comtes de Champagne 1998

Originally James Bond's favourite. Rich, ripe fruit, full bodied flavours and an excellent finish.

1

£58.29

### Perrier Jouet Belle Epoque Vintage 2002

Cuvée Belle Epoque remains one of the most popular Vintage Champagnes not just because of its peerless presentation. It has amazing biscuit and almond flavours, a floral bouquet and a finish to die for.

1

£66.03



### Dom Perignon 1998

Did this famous monk invent Champagne or not? Whatever, the champagne bearing his name is one of the region's best.

1

£77.62

### Krug Grande Prestige Cuvée Brut

Strictly this is a Krug, as the price suggests, undoubtedly a top producer of a rich, fruity but elegant wine.

1

£97.11

### Krug Vintage 1996

Vintage Krug with fourteen years bottle age is very rare. This has a silky richness and a hugely long finish.

1

£130.40

### Louis Roederer Cristal Brut

A very famous but truly wonderful Champagne produced in maddeningly small quantities is magnificent with ten years' age in bottle but who can wait?

1

£176.15

## VINTAGE ROSE CHAMPAGNES

### Veuve Clicquot Rosé 2002

Big, rich Pinot Noir fruit.

1A

£38.92

## NON VINTAGE CHAMPAGNES

We have selected our non vintage Champagnes from the Grandes Marques we rate most highly. If you have a particular Non Vintage Champagne you would like to list, please ask your Account Executive to contact the wine team. We do have to say however that we consider ours a reasonable choice of styles and price points including as it does thirteen of the twenty two houses listed on page 28.

### Mumm Cordon Rouge Brut NV

Another established Champagne house which has improved in recent years. Still used in Formula One, the wine is full and rounded with peach and apricot fruit flavours with a vanilla and caramel finish.

### Lanson Black Label NV

The second largest U.K. brand and back to form with lemon sherbet flavours.

### Perrier Jouet Grand Brut NV

Shows the hallmarks of elegance and finesse with soft and creamy flavours.

### Laurent Perrier Brut NV

Now fully recovered to its place among the top quality Champagne houses, this fruity, elegant wine has a higher proportion of Chardonnay.

### Moet et Chandon Brut NV

Still the Champagne brand leader.

Also available in 20cl bottles.

37.5cl bottle

### Taittinger Brut NV

Crisp and delicate but luscious style with elegant lemon and biscuit flavours achieved by using only the first pressings of the grapes.

### Pol Roger Brut Reserve NV

A very elegant Champagne with an apple and brioche aroma and hints of honey and fresh acidity on the palate.

### Billecart-Salmon Brut NV

Delicious, elegant and refreshing.

37.5cl bottle

### Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label Brut NV

Famous for a long time for its consistent quality and full but biscuity finish.

### Bollinger Special Cuvée NV

One of the best known Champagne houses; the non-vintage is full-bodied and almost meaty.

Taste  
Guide

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

1

Trade  
Sales Price

£18.38

£18.62

£19.58

£23.49

£24.12

£13.56

£24.12

£24.12

£25.49

£13.49

£26.62

£27.11



CHAMPAGNE

## NON VINTAGE ROSE CHAMPAGNES

### ££ Mumm Cordon Rouge Rosé NV

This rosé is tremendous value compared to other Rosé Champagnes and delivers a refreshing taste of ripe strawberry flavours on the palate.

### Taittinger Brut Prestige Rosé NV

The addition of still red wine from first class vineyards gives this rosé a lovely depth of colour as well as aromas and flavours of red fruits.

### Perrier Jouet Blason Rosé NV

Bright pink colour with a full bouquet, ample fruit and hints of roses. Rich in the mouth with an elegant aftertaste.

### Moet et Chandon NV Rosé

Refreshing clean floral aromas and tastes.

### Veuve Clicquot Rosé NV

Credited as the first Champagne house to produce rosé, this has lots of summer fruits character.

### Laurent Perrier Rosé NV

The brand leader in Rosé Champagne. Bottled in its distinctive dumpy bottle and well enough made to repay being kept for a year or two.

1A

1A

1A

1A

1A

1A

£25.03

£29.09

£30.95

£31.12

£32.02

£37.95