

Wine Training Part 2



CHAMPAGNE & SPARKLING WINES

CHENIN BLANC

SAUVIGNON BLANC

CHARDONNAY

WHITE RHONE

The ***Méthode Champenoise***, a complicated process involving secondary fermentation in the bottle, is at the heart of Champagne's character, and has been adopted by sparkling winemakers worldwide. The term, like "Champagne" itself, is protected by the EU, and may only be applied to sparkling wines produced according to the prescribed method within the Champagne AOP.

Dom Pérignon's lasting contributions to modern Champagne lie in the techniques of *assemblage* (blending) and viticulture, despite the persistent myth that anoints him as the inventor of sparkling winemaking. As cellar master at the Abbey of Hautvillers from 1668 until his death in 1715, Pérignon struggled with the problem of natural refermentation. The irrepressibly cold winters of the region created a danger: as the weather cooled off in the autumn and the yeasts became dormant, fermentation would sometimes prematurely stop, and the wines would be bottled with fermentable sugars still present. With the spring thaw and rising temperatures, yeasts would awaken inside the bottle, and refermentation occurred. The resulting sparkle was a fatal flaw, as the weak, wood-fired French glass of the past could not withstand the mounting gas pressure, and bottles would explode, often causing a chain reaction throughout the cellar.

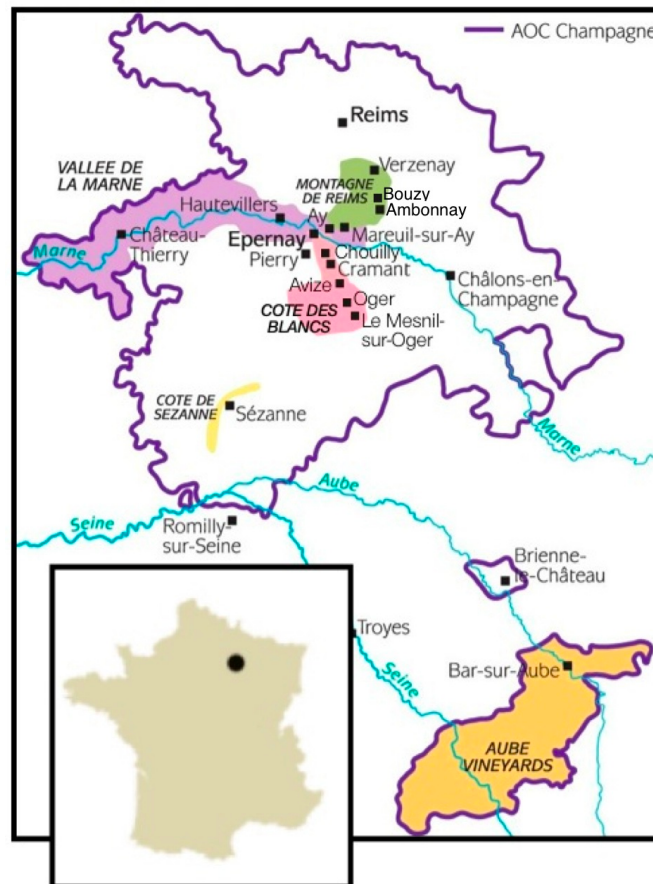
The houses of Ruinart, Taittinger, Moët et Chandon, Delamotte and Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin were founded in the 18th century, yet sparkling Champagne production would remain problematic and imprecise until the early 1800s, when several key developments in both method and science provided a great leap forward for sparkling wines.

Madame Barbe-Nicole Ponsardin, the Veuve ("widow") Clicquot, assumed control of the house that bears her name after her husband's death shortly after the turn of the 19th century. Under her leadership, the house pioneered the process of *remuage*, or riddling—a procedure that allows sediment to be easily removed from a bottle during *dégorgement* (disgorgement). Regulating and understanding Chaptalization was also a very important contribution. Improvements in both cork and glass paralleled the advancing science, and Champagne quickly evolved into a huge industry. Champagne counted the royal Tsars of Russia, the kings of Belgium and Greece, and most of the English aristocracy as regular customers, and a longstanding association with French royalty served to buttress the new status of sparkling wine as a luxury product worthy of conspicuous consumption.

Viticulture and Climate in Champagne

The region of Champagne is located along the 48th parallel. With a mean annual temperature of only 50°F, ripening is extremely variable, and quality can differ greatly from year to year, requiring the houses of Champagne to blend between vintages to achieve a consistency in their house styles. Grape acidity usually remains markedly high—an important attribute for sparkling wines. The Champagne region is renowned for its huge network of cellars carved out of the chalk and limestone subsoil, which provides a perfect natural storage environment of 53-54° F for millions of bottles.

The three principal grapes authorized for the production of Champagne are Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and the black grape Pinot Meunier (“miller’s” Pinot, named for the dusty appearance of its leaves). Each grape contributes a different element: Chardonnay provides elegance and longevity, Pinot Noir supports the wine’s structure, richness and body, and Pinot Meunier, or simply Meunier, lends a youthful fruitiness and approachability.



The Regions of Champagne

Many of the major commercial houses of Champagne are located in the city of Reims and the smaller towns of Épernay and Ay. The 357 villages authorized to grow grapes for Champagne are split between five districts: the Montagne de Reims, Vallée de la Marne, Côte des Blancs, Côte de Sézanne, and the Côte des Bars (the Aube). Chardonnay is almost exclusively planted, as its name indicates, on the slopes of the Côte des Blancs.

Cru status is awarded to entire villages in Champagne, rather than individual vineyards or properties. However, the areas authorized for cultivation within each commune are strictly defined. Currently, 17 villages have grand cru status and 44 are classified as premier cru, according to their ranking in the *Échelle de Crus*.

Types of Champagne Producers

Every bottle of Champagne bears a series of digits—the matriculation number—a code assigned to each producer by the CIVC. A set of initials precedes the number, denoting the type of producer who made the wine.

- **NM (Négociant Manipulant)**: A house that purchases grapes and or base wines from growers and other smaller houses.
- **RM (Récoltant Manipulant)**: A grower-producer who makes Champagne from estate-grown fruit. 95% of the grapes must originate in the producer's own vineyards.
- **CM (Coopérative Manipulant)**: A growers' co-operative that produces the wine under a single brand.

The *Méthode Champenoise*

Black grapes must be pressed especially quickly after harvest, lest they color the must. After pressing, the juice is allowed to settle prior to fermentation to remove any debris. The must will then undergo primary fermentation, resulting in high-acid base wines. Primary fermentation may occur in either stainless steel or oak—typically used barrels, although some producers do use a percentage of new wood. After both the primary has concluded, the base wines will generally be clarified.

At this stage the blender will taste the lots of base wine, and determine a house's hallmark blend, drawing on reserve stocks from previous years to provide complexity and richness. For rosé wines, a small proportion of base red wine is generally added. After the **assemblage** the blend will be bottled with the addition of **liqueur de tirage**, a mixture of still wine, yeasts, sugar, and fining agents that will serve to ignite the second fermentation.

The secondary fermentation lasts up to eight weeks, as the yeast slowly converts the additional sugar to alcohol and carbon dioxide. During the second fermentation, the bottles are usually stored horizontally. Autolysis, the breakdown of dead yeast cells, forms sediment, or lees, in the bottle as second fermentation occurs. The wine will be aged on the lees for an appropriate period—a minimum of 12 months is required for non-vintage wines—prior to their removal from the bottle through *dégorgement*.

In preparation for **dégorgement**, the sediment must first be trapped in the neck of the bottle. The gyropalette has replaced hand-riddling at all of the major houses, although some prestige cuvée bottlings are still handled manually.

As the wines are fully fermented to total dryness, the bottles are then topped off with **dosage**, or **liqueur d'expédition**, a liquid mixture of sugar syrup and wine. Rarely, bone-dry non-dosage styles are produced. The amount of sugar in the **dosage** is determined by the desired style of

the wine. *Brut* is the most common sweetness level and the level at which most houses bottle vintage and prestige cuvées. Confusingly Extra Brut is sweeter than Brut.

After the addition of *dosage*, the bottle is secured with a cork and six half-twists of a wire cage. The Champagne is then aged in bottle prior to release. Non-vintage styles must remain in the cellar for a total minimum of 15 months (including the period of lees aging), whereas vintage wines require 36 months in the cellar. In reality, many top vintage wines and prestige cuvées slumber in the caves of Champagne for much longer prior to appearing on the market.

Styles of Champagne

- **Non-Vintage (NV):** Generally *brut* in style, the NV cuvée represents a house's signature style, and the blender's job is to ensure its consistency from year to year. Non-vintage Champagne makes up at least three-quarters of the market.
- **Vintage:** 100% of the blend must come from the stated vintage, yet a maximum 80% of a year's harvest may be sold as vintage Champagne. The better houses declare a vintage only in exceptional years. These are usually *brut* in style, and good examples can age for a decade or more.
- **Blanc de Blancs:** 100% Chardonnay is required, but it is not always sourced from the Côte des Blancs. They may be vintage-dated or NV. The *Blanc de Blancs* category represents some of Champagne's most ageworthy bottlings; while austere and often steely in youth, better examples develop an intense bouquet with maturity.
- **Blanc de Noirs:** White wine produced solely from black grapes. The wine usually displays richness, intensity, and weight, although it can lack the supreme elegance and finesse of *Blanc de Blancs*.
- **Prestige Cuvée (Tête de Cuvée):** Usually the finest and most expensive bottling that a house offers, the prestige cuvée is typically (but not always) vintage-dated and aged for a number of years prior to release. Prestige Cuvées are usually only released in superior vintages, and may undergo more traditional vinification procedures, such as barrel fermentation, riddling by hand, and cork-finishing during the second fermentation. Prestige cuvées may be *Blanc de Blancs*, *Blanc de Noirs* or rosé in style. Not all houses produce a prestige cuvée, and some produce several. Classic examples include Moët et Chandon "Dom Pérignon", Louis Roederer "Cristal" and Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin "La Grande Dame".
- **Special Club Prestige Cuvée:** The "Special Club" concept originated in 1971, with a dozen grower-producers. Lacking the marketing budgets of larger houses, these producers banded together to promote their prestige cuvées through identical packaging. Today, the *Club Trésors* comprises over two-dozen RM producers as members. The Special Club bottlings are estate-bottled, vintage-dated wines that represent the pinnacle of each individual grower's style and production. Special Club bottles and labels share identical design.
- **Rosé Champagne:** Vintage, NV, and prestige cuvées may also be produced in pink versions. The traditional *saignée* method, in which the wine gains its hue through extended skin contact, is less common than blending. A rosé prestige cuvée, a novelty

in years past, is usually the most expensive and rare product house offers.

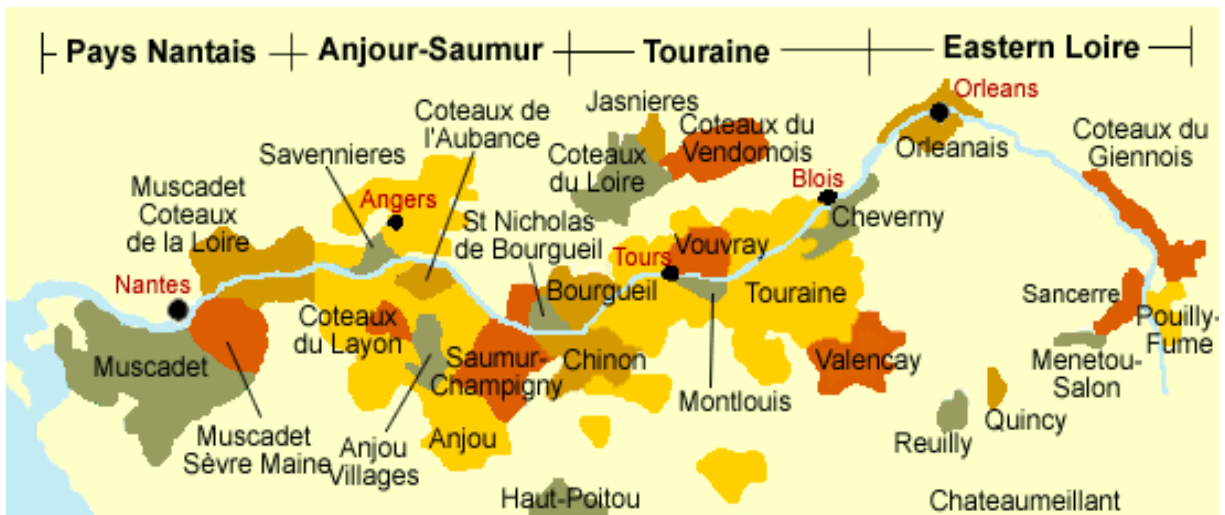
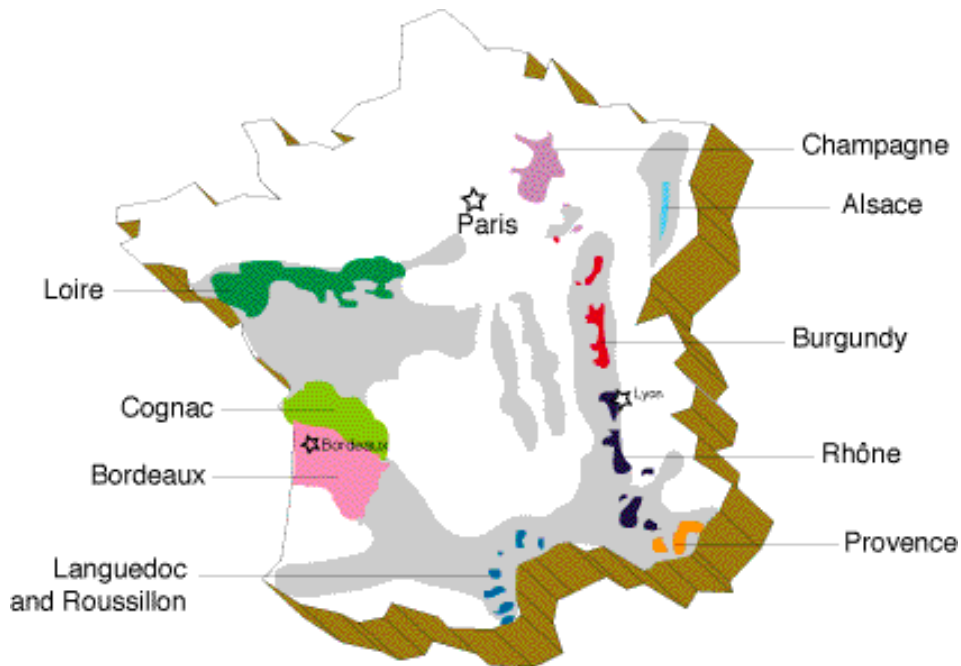
Other Traditional Method Sparkling Wines

In France, there are seven AOP regions for *Crémant* wines produced by the traditional method: Crémant de Bordeaux, Crémant de Bourgogne, Crémant de Loire, Crémant de Limoux, Crémant de Die, Crémant du Jura, and Crémant d'Alsace. The grape blends varies widely according to the appellation but otherwise the wines are produced by the method prescribed for Champagne.

In Italy, the best traditional method sparkling wines are produced in Lombardy, within the DOCGs of Franciacorta. All Spanish Cava are produced by the traditional method. Quality sparkling wines are made on America's West Coast—in Carneros, Napa Valley, Anderson Valley, Willamette Valley, and Washington. Roederer established operations in Anderson Valley in Mendocino, whereas Taittinger and Moët et Chandon founded American projects in Carneros and Yountville, respectively. Traditional method sparkling wines are made in New York, Canada, and even New Mexico.

Other Sparkling Winemaking Methods

The Charmat Process/*Cuve Close*/Tank Method: quicker, cheaper, and less labor-intensive than the traditional method. After the wine undergoes primary fermentation, *liqueur de tirage* is added to the wine, provoking a second fermentation, which occurs in a pressurized tank. The wine is then filtered and bottled. The lack of extended lees contact in the tank method is not suitable for making quality wines in the style of Champagne. This method is appropriate and even preferred for sparkling wines emphasizing fruit and varietal aromatics rather than the flavors derived from autolysis. Most Prosecco bottlings are produced in this method.



LOIRE VALLEY

The Loire Valley produces more white wine than any other French region, and is second only to Champagne in sparkling wine production. Just about every style of wine is made here, from dry still wines to snappy sparkling wines to elegant, long lived sweet wines. In the United States, the most familiar of these are Muscadet, Vouvray, Sancerre and Pouilly-Fume. The Loire is also known for red wines made from Cabernet Franc such as Chinon as well as rose wines.

The Grapes of the Loire Valley

WHITE GRAPES	RED GRAPES
---------------------	-------------------

Chenin Blanc: used for numerous wines including Vouvray, Savennieres, Jasnières and Quarts de Chaume (Dessert wine)	Cabernet Franc: Source for Loire's best red wines: Chinon, Bourgueil and Saumur Champigny.
Melon de Bourgogne: Grape used for Muscadet	Gamay: makes light, juicy and quaffable red and rose wines
Fie Gris: small amounts planted in the Touraine. Similar to Sauvignon Blanc	Grolleau: dominant grape in rose wines and also used as a blending grape
Tressalier: minor grape, high in acid, planted in St. Pourcain	Pinot Noir: Used for the red and rose wines of Sancerre
Sauvignon Blanc: Used to make Sancerre, Menetou-Salon and Pouilly-Fume	Cot/Malbec - used as a blending grape Cabernet Sauvignon: Small amounts used as a blending component

MUSCADET

This is Muscadet country: a cool, wet maritime region planted primarily to the Melon de Bourgogne grape. Muscadet Sèvre-et-Maine wines account for over 80% of Muscadet production. Nearly half of the Sèvre-et-Maine production is bottled **sur lie**. *Sur lie* wines are aged on their lees over the winter, and are bottled directly off the fine lees (without filtering) between March 1 and November 30 of the year following the harvest. The process adds complexity, richness and a slight sparkle to the finished wines. Quintessential wine to pair with shellfish platters.

CHENIN BLANC

Chenin blanc's high acidity means it can be used to make everything from sparkling wines to well-balanced dessert wines, although it can produce very bland, neutral wines as well. Outside the Loire it is found in most of the New World wine regions; it is the most widely planted variety in South Africa, where it is also known as **Steen**.

- **Vouvray** - they aim for an off-dry style, developing honey and floral characteristics with age. In the best vintages the grapes can be left on the vines to develop noble rot, producing an intense, viscous dessert wine which may improve considerably with age. Vouvray is divided into four levels of sweetness: sec, demi-sec, moelleux and doux.
- **Savennieres** - perhaps the source for the greatest dry Chenin Blanc in the world. These are densely flavored wines with intense grip, minerality and taut acidity. They can be aged for decades. Flavors include quince, chamomile, honey and cream with notes of citrus rind.
- **Quarts de Chaume** - Protected from the prevailing winds and touched by morning mists

streaming from the Layon, the small appellation is a good incubator for *noble rot*, and, like Sauternes, its regulations require manual harvests to be conducted in successive *tries*. Luscious, intensely sweet dessert wines made from Chenin Blanc.

SAUVIGNON BLANC

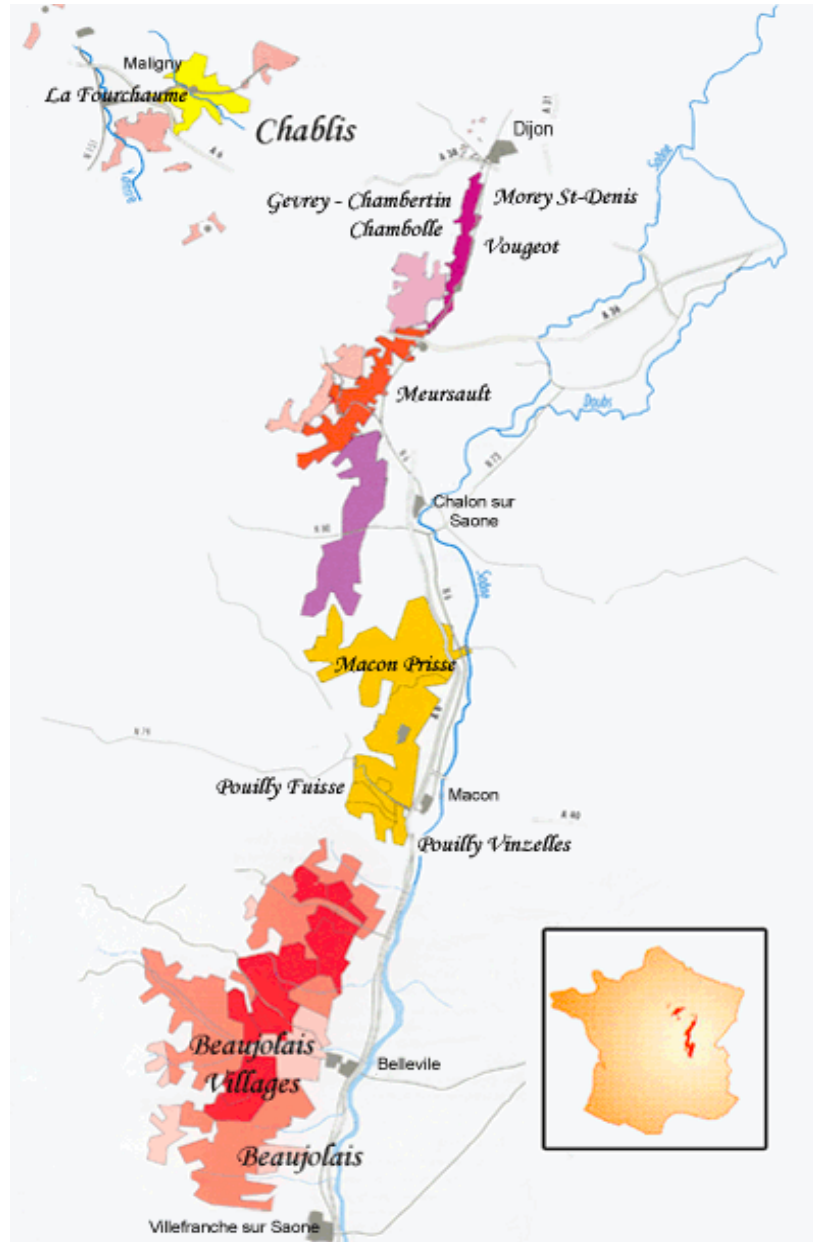
The Loire Valley represents the most quintessential expression of the grape with notes of racy gunflint, herbal and smoky flavors. The best of these wines are true to the word of Sauvignon's roots - *sauvage*.

- **Sancerre:** Sancerre is often compared to neighboring Pouilly-Fumé. Broadly speaking, Sancerre tends to have a fuller body with more pronounced aromas, while Pouilly-Fumé wines are more perfumed.
- **Pouilly Fumé:** Pouilly Fumé originate from the town of Pouilly-sur-Loire, located directly across the Loire River from the commune of Sancerre. The soil here is very flinty with deposits of limestone which the locals believed imparted a smoky, gun flint flavor to the wine and hence *Fumé*, the French word for "smoke" was attached to the wine.
- **Menetou-Salon:** Menetou-Salon neighbours Sancerre, and shares many traits with its more illustrious neighbour. With limestone-rich soils very similar to those in Sancerre and Pouilly-Fumé,

New Zealand: New Zealand is best known for its white wines and in particular for its racy and vibrant Sauvignon Blancs, especially those from the Marlborough region. New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc has been described by some as "alive with flavors of cut grass and fresh fruits", and others as "cat's pee on a gooseberry bush" (but not necessarily as a criticism).

North America: In North America, California is the leading producer of Sauvignon Blanc. In California wine produced from the Sauvignon Blanc grape is also known as *Fumé Blanc*. This California wine was first made by Napa Valley's Robert Mondavi Winery in 1968. At that time the variety had a poor reputation in California due to its grassy flavor and aggressive aromas. Mondavi decided to try to tame that aggressiveness with barrel agings and released the wine under the name Fumé Blanc as an allusion to the French Pouilly-Fumé. California Sauvignon Blancs tend to fall into two styles. The New Zealand influenced-Sauvignon Blanc have more tropical fruit undertones with citrus and passion fruit notes. The Mondavi-influenced Fumé Blanc are more round with melon notes.

White Bordeaux & Sauternes: Sauvignon Blanc is grown in Bordeaux (especially in Entre-Deux-Mers, Graves and Pessac-Leognan as a dry wine, and in Sauternes as a sweet wine). The gravel soil found near the Loire River and its tributaries impart spicy, floral and mineral flavors while in Bordeaux, the wines have a more fruit-forward personality. Along with Sémillon, Muscadelle and Ugni Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc is one of only four white grapes allowed in the production of white Bordeaux wine. In the Sauternes region, the grape is blended with Sémillon to make the late harvest wine, *Sauternes*.



CHARDONNAY

Chardonnay originated in the Burgundy wine region of eastern France but is now grown wherever wine is produced, from England to New Zealand. For new and developing wine regions, growing Chardonnay is seen as a "rite of passage" and an easy entry into the international wine market. The Chardonnay grape itself is very neutral, with many of the flavors commonly associated with the grape being derived from such influences as *terroir* and oak. It is vinified in many different styles, from the lean, crisply mineral wines of Chablis, France to New World wines with oak, and tropical fruit flavors. A peak in popularity in the late 1980s gave way to a backlash among those wine drinkers who saw the grape as a leading negative component of the globalization of wine. It remains one of the most widely-planted grapes in the world.

BURGUNDY

Burgundy, a pastoral region in central France, has a lengthy winemaking history that dates back nearly 2000 years. Some of the world's most famous wine villages and vineyards are located in Burgundy, and many can trace their origins back to the Christian monks of the Middle Ages. Over the centuries, Burgundy's vignerons have discerned subtle variations in soil and climate. The modern appellation system of Burgundy draws from these many years of experience, placing high importance on the shape, soil, and slope of the land itself.

Burgundy's appellation system can be difficult to grasp, but it is important to understand the distinctions on a label. Two wines from the same producer may carry nearly identical labels, yet vary in price by hundreds of dollars.

- **BOURGOGNE**

Wines from any area in the entire region of Burgundy may be labeled as Bourgogne AOP. This is typically the most inexpensive offering in a producer's portfolio, and it represents basic varietal quality without definition of site or terroir.

- **VILLAGE**

Many prominent villages in Burgundy have AOP status. This assures the wine was produced from grapes grown in that particular village. The village AOPs of the Côte d'Or are the most renowned, and the best villages have a classic style profile associated with them.

- **PREMIER CRU**

Within each of the better villages, there are certain single vineyards believed to produce superior wines, and accorded additional respect in the AOP laws. These are known as Premier Crus, or "1er Crus." If the term appears on a label, the wine is likely to be superior in quality to a village-level wine, and it is undoubtedly higher in price and scarcer in quantity. Premier Cru wines often include the name of a single premier cru vineyard.

- **GRAND CRU**

Grand Crus are single vineyards so highly regarded in quality that they are granted their own AOP status. They range in size from two to nearly 400 acres. Grand Cru AOPs—Chambertin, Montrachet, and la Romanée—command so much fame and prestige that the villages around them, Gevrey-Chambertin, Puligny-Montrachet, Chassagne-Montrachet, and Vosne-Romanée — adopted the vineyards' names.

CHABLIS

Located to the north of the Côte d'Or, the Chablis AOP produces white wines from 100% Chardonnay. The classic style of the village is a bracing, steely, mineral, slightly oxidative white wine. Chablis wines are often very austere in their youth, and lighter in body than their counterparts from the Côte d'Or. The region's limestone soils are reflected in the chiseled, chalky character of the wines. New oak aging is an unusual sight in the cellars of Chablis.

- Petit Chablis: Basic quality Chardonnay from lesser sites
- Chablis: Village wines
- Chablis “Premier Cru”: 40 high quality sites of which 17 top names, such as Montée de Tonnerre, Montmains, or Vaillons, often appear on labels.
- Chablis Grand Cru: 7 Grand Cru sites enjoy southwestern exposure, just north of the town of Chablis itself. The best Grand Cru vineyards in Chablis are Les Clos, Valmur, and Vaudésir.

The Côte d’Or is the heart of Burgundy, and includes the region’s most iconic vineyards and villages. The northern sector of the Côte d’Or is called the Côte de Nuits, and it is home to all but one of Burgundy’s red Grand Cru vineyards. The southern sector, the Côte de Beaune, is highly acclaimed for the quality of its white wines; all but one of the Côte d’Or’s white Grand Cru vineyards are located here.

White wines from the Côte de Beaune can range in style from full-bodied, oak-driven, opulent Chardonnay to crisp and more mineral examples. In general, white Burgundy is less tropical, less buttery and more defined on the palate than a classic California Chardonnay.

MEURSAULT

Despite its lack of Grand Cru vineyards, Meursault’s white wines are lauded for their rich, nutty, textural qualities. “Les Perrières” is a high quality Premier Cru.

AUXEY-DURESSES

wines are not out of keeping with those from nearby Meursault, although many find them a little more restrained than these richer wines. A significant proportion of the village’s production is sold under the wider Cote de Beaune-Villages appellation, but the increasing interest in Burgundy’s wines means that the value of the commune appellation is increasing year on year. Aromas of fresh almond and apple, to which are added biscuity and mineral (gunflint) notes. It tickles the palate in an agreeable fashion - sprightly when young, fuller and meatier with age, but always with good aromatic persistence.

SAINT-AUBIN

When young, it combines aromas of white flowers, flint, green almond, and orange-flower. Richer fragrances come with age: beeswax and honey, marzipan, ambergris, and cinnamon. This is a firm and flattering wine - a bit sharp to start with but which becomes fleshier and fuller with time.

PULIGNY-MONTRACHET

Puligny-Montrachet AOP takes its name from the Montrachet Grand Cru, site of the world’s most prestigious Chardonnay vines. Puligny is often racier than Meursault’s whites, with distinctive mineral character. The Grand Cru of Chevalier Montrachet is located in the village of Puligny-Montrachet.

CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET

Chassagne-Montrachet, like Puligny, lays claim to part of the Montrachet Grand Cru. The white wines from Chassagne-Montrachet are often weightier and broader than wines from neighboring Puligny.

GIVRY

White Givry is a bright, limpid pale gold. It is redolent of aromas of honey or lemon with notes of lime and lily, then dried fruits (often toasted) come to the fore after the wine has aged some years. The mouth is delicate, with a balance between mellowness and acidity which guarantees its keeping qualities as well as giving it good length.

RULLY

The commune and wine appellation of Rully in the north of the Côte Chalonnaise region produces both red and white wines but is better known for the latter. Typically Rully Blanc (100% Chardonnay, fermented and matured in oak barrels) is accessible relatively early in life but well made barrel fermented examples can age for up to five years.

MACON

The typical *Macon-Villages* wine is lightly floral and fruity, with a warm hint of citrus fruit. The best examples have a gently nutty character, reminiscent of almonds or hazelnuts.

POUILLY-FUISSÉ

Although the wine is called Pouilly-Fuissé these are actually two separate places: Fuissé and Pouilly. The wine style ranges from dry and fairly delicate to rich and full-bodied. And while the best Pouilly-Fuissés can be nearly as complex as their Côte d'Or village counterparts, some people can't get past the 70's image.

NORTH AMERICAN CHARDONNAY

Chateau Montelena's victory over Chardonnay from Burgundy in the 1976 blind tasting event conducted by French judges known as the Judgment of Paris increased demand for Californian Chardonnay and as a result Californian winemakers rushed to increase plantings. The early trend was to imitate the great Burgundy wines but soon gave way to more rich buttery and oaked styles.

The Californian wine regions that seem to favor producing premium quality Chardonnay are the ones that are most influenced, climatically, by coastal fogs that can slow the ripening of the grape and give it more time to develop its flavors. The regions of Alexander Valley, Los Carneros, Santa Maria Valley, Russian River Valley and other parts of Sonoma county have shown success in producing wines that reflect more Burgundian styles. Other regions often associated with Chardonnay include Napa Valley, Monterey County and Santa Barbara County. While the exact style of the wine will vary from producer, some of the *terroir* characteristics associated with California Chardonnay include "flinty" notes with the Russian River Valley and

mango & guava from Monterey.

VIIGNIER

Viognier wines are well known for their floral aromas. There are also many other powerful flower and fruit aromas which can be perceived in these wines depending on where they were grown, the weather conditions and how old the vines were. The color and the aroma of the wine suggest a sweet wine but Viognier wines are predominantly dry, although sweet late-harvest dessert wines have been made. It is a grape with low acidity; it is sometimes used to soften wines made predominantly with the red Syrah grape. In addition to its softening qualities the grape also adds a stabilizing agent and enhanced perfume to the red wine.

WHITE RHONE BLENDS

White Rhone blends consist of two or more white grapes from its namesake region. This includes Viognier, Roussanne, Marsanne and Grenache Blanc. Other white grapes may be included in miniscule amounts, but the above four are the principles. In the Rhone, Viognier is typically alone in the Northern Rhone and absent in the Southern Rhone, although, in the north, 20% of the variety can be blended into the predominant Syrah of Cote Rotie. Marsanne and Roussanne are two peas in pod - usually found together both in and outside of the Rhone region. Blends outside of the Rhone are mostly found in California and Australia and can include all of the four primary varieties together. Flavors of white Rhone blends include spice, nut, honeysuckle and green apple.

NORTHERN RHONE WHITES

- Condrieu - Viognier only.
- Château-Grillet - Viognier only
- Saint-Joseph - Marsanne and Roussanne.
- Crozes-Hermitage - Marsanne and Roussanne.
- Hermitage - Marsanne and Roussanne.
- Saint-Péray AOC - sparkling and still whites of only Marsanne and Roussanne.

SOUTHERN RHONE WINES

White wines from the southern Rhône sub-region, such as in Châteauneuf-du-Pape whites, are also typically blends of several wine grapes. These may include Ugni Blanc, Roussanne, Bourboulenc, Picpoul, and Clairette. Since about 1998 Viognier is increasingly being used and is also appearing as a single varietal.

LANGUEDOC BLENDS

The Languedoc-Roussillon area is home to numerous grape varieties, including many international varieties like Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. Other varieties that can be found include Roussanne, Marsanne, Vermentino, Bourboulenc, Clairette Blanche, Grenache Blanc, Grenache gris, Picpoul, Maccabéo and Rolle.

