

## CHAMPAGNE

- Region is in northern France, 90 miles northeast of Paris... cold!
- Chalky soil known for lending its signature minerality
- 3 main grapes: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier
- 5 main sub-regions: Montagne de Reims, Vallée de la Marne, Côte des Blancs, Côte de Sézanne, Aube (a.k.a. Côte des Bars)
- Style widely varies based on grapes, vineyard sites, dosage, vintage, winemaking
- Champagne Method involves secondary fermentation in the bottle, creating bubbles

### 1) Val de Mer Crémant de Bourgogne Non-Dosé NV – Burgundy, France

- NOT Champagne... but really close physically and stylistically
- From Chablis; the limestone soil gives this a chalky minerality
- Also a similarly cool climate to Champagne; also 100% Chardonnay
- Crémant is a term for French sparkling wine made using the Champagne Method, a.k.a. Traditional Method
- Non-dosé means no dosage added to the final blend; relies on ripe grapes to provide a balanced style

### 2) Louis Roederer Brut Premier NV – Reims, Champagne

- Reims is the “capital” of Champagne; the hub of production; most large houses here
- Louis Roederer is a *négociant manipulant* (NM on labels), which means they buy fruit from various growers; Roederer also owns many vineyards throughout the region
- Brut is most common style; indicates the wine has 0-12 grams per liter residual sugar
- NV = Non-Vintage; typical for Champagne, it’s a blend of fruit from different vintages
- This is the same Roederer house that makes Cristal, their *tête de cuvée*



### 3) La Caravelle Blanc de Blancs NV – Épernay, Champagne

- Épernay is another “big” Champagne town, located in between the Vallée de la Marne and the Côte des Blancs
- Blanc de Blancs means “white from whites,” or 100% Chardonnay
- Chardonnay grape contributes citrus and apple notes, elegance and brightness
- MA = *Marque d’Acheteur*; they buy the wine already made and sell it with their own label; relies on great relationships with producers in the region

### 4) Doyard Cuvée Vendémiaire Blanc de Blancs Brut NV – Vertus, Champagne

- Doyard is a *récoltant manipulateur* (RM on labels), which means they grow all of their own fruit and make wine from it; a.k.a. “Grower Champagne”
- Vertus is a Premier Cru in the Côte des Blancs; based on the *Échelle de Crus*
- Doyard also uses a lighter *liqueur de tirage*, which is the sugar solution that starts the secondary fermentation in bottle; this results in a lower pressure in the finished wine

### 5) Marie-Courtin Résonance Blanc de Noirs Extra Brut NV – Poliset, Champagne

- Run by Dominique Moreau (RM or “grower” producer); named for her grandmother
- Blanc de Noirs (“white from blacks”), 100% Pinot Noir
- Pinot Noir contributes power, structure, richness
- Extra Brut indicates the wine has 0-6 grams per liter residual sugar (drier than Brut)
- Poliset is in the Aube sub-region, way down south and closer to Chablis than Reims
- The Aube was at one point exiled from Champagne region, causing a riot in 1911
- Today the area is a hotbed of quality and very site-specific vigneron

### 6) Michel Lorient Réserve Blanc de Noirs Brut NV – Festigny, Champagne

- Festigny is in the Vallée de la Marne
- Pinot Meunier very popular in Vallée de la Marne; the area is prone to frost, and Meunier is prized as it ripens earlier
- This Blanc de Noirs is 100% Pinot Meunier
- Pinot Meunier grape contributes fruitiness and accessibility

