

HOLIDAY CHAMPAGNE SALE

15 PERCENT OFF

On all purchases of three or more bottles
All bubbly in stock eligible - available through 12/30/17

ARTISAN CHAMPAGNES - EXCLUSIVELY

Our mantra for Champagne is “small is beautiful”. For a decade now, we have exclusively purchased Champagnes made by small-scale artisan grower-producers. With the best of the artisans, you get the best of everything – high quality, distinctiveness, and value. Why drink mass-produced products when you can enjoy better Champagnes at better prices, crafted by passionate artisans? Importer Terry Thesei calls them “utopian wine-freak types who are driven to make superlative hooch.” Among our small-scale grower-producers, Ruelle-Patois makes just 4,000 cases a year, Marc Hebrart 8,800 cases, Lancelot-Pienne merely 3,800 cases, and Vilmart 9,000 cases. A far cry from the millions of cases Veuve Clicquot churns out.

We’ve been highly selective this season, searching for superb quality and fair pricing. We have 31 Champagnes available this year, from 14 different producers. Virtually all of them will be open at our tasting bar sometime during November and December, starting with our first Champagne tasting of the season on Friday November 10 and Saturday 11.

Artisan Champagne Sampler

This six bottle sampler is the Champagne **buy of the season**, and a great way to enjoy the holidays. All six are crafted in small batches by their proprietors. Each has a distinctive and individualistic style, reflecting the terroir of its origin and the artistic sensibility of its maker. Each delivers thrilling quality, and together they present an interesting diversity of styles. They are yours for **\$39.83 a bottle**.

Champagne “Grande Reserve” (Veuve Fourny); Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara)
Champagne “Solesse” (J.M. Seleque); Champagne “Cramant Grand Cru” (Lancelot-Pienne)
2008 Champagne “Grand Cru” (Ruelle-Patois); Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Moncuit)

20 Percent Off Regular Pricing - \$239.00

(\$239.00/6 bottles = \$39.83/bottle)

THE EFFECT OF GOOD CHAMPAGNE

“It was midwinter, in leafless Sussex. I was with an old friend who had suffered. His life had, over the previous four months, undergone dislocating reverses that ended everything for which he had worked with ceaseless energy over the previous twenty-five years. His circumstances, never more than modest, had begun to flirt with squalor. In his mid-fifties now, this usually good-humoured stoic seemed defeated. We talked amid the metaphorical ruins for an hour or two. He barely smiled.

“I think,’ I said, as midday passed, ‘we should drink some Champagne.’ He looked at me, pulling on his hand-rolled cigarette. He loved good wine, but he had particular reasons for loving good Champagne above all good wines. I had, in my car, a bottle of Mumm de Cramant. It was a cold day, and the Champagne had acquired a light chill. We lodged the bottle in his fridge’s freezer compartment for a few final chilling minutes while I cleaned the glasses, breaking one in the process.

“I poured. The wine gleamed greenly, topped with enticing snow. It was our first drink of the day. The Cramant smelled fresh: sweet apples. It tasted green – yet round, vivid, surging. We carried on talking, we ate some saucisson, chorizo, bread, avocado. The Champagne grew finer and finer. We were hypnotized by its seeming contradictions: its crispness, its edginess, its sappiness... and yet its roundness and fullness, too. Would any other wine have served us as well? Perhaps; yet this Champagne memory will abide while all the others – the dull receptions, the tedious parties, the routine markers for the stations of the year – have long faded. My friend’s spirits were raised: we laughed and smiled; his eyes gleamed again.

“I detain you with this story only because it illustrates an essential truth of Champagne: that this is, more than most, a wine of general appeal rather than particular excellence. My friend and I drank Mumm de Cramant, but it could have been any other good Champagne; the point was that it was good Champagne. No other wine carries the same weight of symbolical significance; no other wine was in quite the same position to lift the spirits, almost outrageously, at such a moment. Its taste, of course, makes it suitable for drinking at any time; meals are never obligatory, as they would be for a fine bottle of Hermitage or Madiran. It is an occasion as much as a wine.”

- Andrew Jefford, *The New France*

20 PERCENT OFF HALF-CASE SPECIALS

available through 12/30/17 - while supplies last

Crémant de Bourgogne “Chablis” (Collet)

This is bubbly from Chablis, made from estate fruit by Gilles and Romain Collet. Their idea is to preserve and showcase the classic attributes of Chablisienne Chardonnay - the bright, zesty fruit, the dryness, the minerality, the focus - in a sparkling wine. Half the grapes come from villages-level vines, and half from young vines in the Premier Cru Vaillons. And it is Chablis through and through, light on its feet, its flavors crisp and pure, its mousse fine and persistent. At the same price as a good villages-level Chablis, it is quite a bargain.

Crémant de Bourgogne “Chablis” (Gilles and Romain Collet) \$30.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$144.00
(\$144.00/6 bottles = \$24.00/bottle)

LANGHE SPUMANTE ROSÉ (DELTETTO)

This superb sparkling wine is the one closest in character to Champagne among our selections this year. It comes from Piedmont in northern Italy. Deltetto is in the hills of the Roero district, just to the north of Barolo and Barbaresco. Their sparkling rose is an inspired blend of 50 percent Pinot Noir and 50 percent Nebbiolo. It spends four years on its lees before disgorgement (Champagne only requires 18 months). The purity and refinement of its delicious fruit flavors, its finesse, intricacy, and persistence on the palate are remarkable. You'll be hard-pressed to find a well-priced Champagne substitute with as much allure and class as this.

Langhe Spumante Rosé (Deltetto) \$32.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$153.00
(\$153.00/6 bottles = \$25.50/bottle)

Champagne “Cramant Grand Cru” (Lancelot-Pienne)

We discovered this producer eight years ago, but they remain far under the radar. Lancelot-Pienne is a tiny, estate-bottled producer in Cramant, one of Champagne's renowned Chardonnay villages. They produce only 3800 cases a year. Chardonnay's influence is obvious in this elegant bubbly. It captivates with its fabulously pure apple and pear fruit flavors typical of Cramant's terroir, displaying the finesse of much more expensive Champagnes. It exudes quality, from its taut, mineral-tinged fruit flavors and fine, energetic bubbles to its long, firm, dry finish. This showcases what is compelling about grower Champagnes, and is certainly one of the best buys on the market again this season.

Champagne “Cramant Grand Cru” (Lancelot-Pienne) \$45.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$216.00
(\$216.00/6 bottles = \$36.00/bottle)

Champagne “Grande Reserve” (Veuve Fourny)

Veuve Fourny is a very small, artisan, grower-producer in Vertus, at the southern end of the Côte de Blancs. They are not related to the mega-producer Veuve Clicquot. Veuve Fourny's production is a fraction of one percent of Veuve Clicquot's, but their quality is much higher. If you are going to have one Veuve or the other, Veuve Fourny is the way to go. Their Grande Reserve, a classic blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, is an exceptional bargain.

“Light, bright gold with a slow bead. Fresh, mineral-driven aromas of Meyer lemon, pear and white peach, with a suave floral overtone. Finely balanced and pure, with tangy citrus and orchard fruit flavors underscored by a dusty mineral quality. A brisk, focused, tightly wound Champagne that carries no excess weight and finishes with excellent clarity and mineral thrust. (91/100)”

- Josh Reynolds, *International Wine Cellar*

Champagne “Grande Reserve” (Veuve Fourny) \$45.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$216.00
(\$216.00/6 bottles = \$36.00/bottle)

Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit)

Nicole Moncuit is the matriarch and guiding hand of this small family-owned estate in Le Mesnil, the great Grand Cru village in the Côte des Blancs that produces the greatest Chardonnay in all of Champagne. Moncuit's non-vintage Champagne is always the product of a single vintage. This year it is 2014, and it is superb. It is intricate, pure and seductive at the same time it is powerful, voluptuous and attention-grabbing. A sensational, easy-to-love Champagne that has it all, including an attractive price.

“A complex, strikingly elegant and airy nose features notes of baked bread, yeast, pear, green apple and lovely spice notes. The refined character continues onto the absolutely delicious flavors that possess a moderately exuberant mousse before terminating in a dry, crisp and slightly austere finish that is clean, refreshing and persistent. (93/100)”
 - Allen Meadows, *Burghound.com*

Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit) \$48.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$230.00
 (\$230.00/6 bottles = **\$38.33/bottle**)

Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara)

“Paul Bara is a living legend in Champagne. He took over the firm as a teenager more than sixty years ago and remembers every vintage in perfect detail. He belongs to the sixth generation to run the company since it was founded in 1833. Many major Champagne houses have approached Bara over the years to try to buy the thirty exceptional locations he controls in the village. Bara’s wines have a very elegant fruitiness, which is unique in Bouzy.”
 - Richard Juhlin, *4000 Champagnes*

This is the 33rd consecutive holiday season we have featured Paul Bara’s superb Bouzy Champagne. Paul’s daughter Chantal has run the operation here for many years, with unwavering results. Today there are many more excellent artisan Champagnes available than there were when we started in 1985, but Bara’s is still among the very best. Primarily Pinot Noir, tender and forceful at the same time, it is classic artisanal Champagne.

Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara) \$55.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$264.00
 (\$264.00/6 bottles = **\$44.00/bottle**)

2008 Champagne “Blanc de Blancs” (Ruelle-Pertois)

Ruelle-Pertois is a very small family-owned producer in Moussy, just outside Epernay. They own 15 acres of vineyards, mostly Grand Crus in Cramant, Chouilly and Oiry, and produce a grand total of 4000 cases a year. Extended lees ageing is their secret weapon, giving their Champagnes notable complexity and a luxurious texture. Their vintage bottling is 100 percent Grand Cru Chardonnay. This 2008 was seven years on its lees before disgorgement in April 2016, and it is showing spectacularly well now, with incisive flavors, great intensity, tremendous cut and focus, and an energetic finish. A beautiful Champagne in a classic style, it is a superb bargain from the best Champagne vintage of the last decade. It’s expensive to hold your wines for three to four years longer than your peers, which makes Ruelle-Pertois’ price even more remarkable

2008 Champagne “Blanc de Blancs – Grand Cru” (Ruelle-Pertois) \$58.00
HOLIDAY HALF-CASE SPECIAL 20 Percent Off \$279.00
 (\$279.00/6 bottles = **\$46.50/bottle**)

ARTISAN CHAMPAGNES

	Regular Price	15% Off Price
AGRAPART AVIZE		
Champagne “Les Sept Crus” (Agrapart)	\$ 55.00	\$ 46.75
PAUL BARA BOUZY		
Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara)	\$ 55.00	\$ 46.75
Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara)	375ML .. \$ 31.00	\$ 26.35
Rosé Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara).....	\$ 60.00	\$ 51.00
Rosé Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara).....	375ML .. \$ 34.00	\$ 28.90
2008 Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara)	\$ 75.00	\$ 63.75
2007 Champagne “Bouzy Grand Cru” (Paul Bara).....	MAGNUMS .. \$175.00	\$ 148.75
VEUVE FOURNY VERTUS		
<i>“For a relatively unknown house, I found the quality here to be eye-popping and the prices reasonable as well.”</i> - Allen Meadows, <i>Burghound.com</i>		
Champagne “Grande Reserve” (Veuve Fourny)	\$ 45.00	\$ 38.25
Champagne “Grande Reserve” (Veuve Fourny).....	MAGNUMS .. \$105.00	\$ 89.25
HENRIET-BAZIN VILLERS-MARMENY		
2008 Champagne “Grand Cru” (Henriet-Bazin)	\$ 60.00	\$ 51.00
Rosé Champagne “Grand Cru” (Henriet-Bazin).....	\$ 55.00	\$ 46.75
Rosé Champagne “Grand Cru” (Henriet-Bazin).....	MAGNUMS .. \$115.00	\$ 97.75

GASTON CHIQUET DIZY

2009 Champagne “Special Club” (Gaston Chiquet)..... \$ 90.00 \$ 76.50

*“In contrast to Chiquet’s vintage brut, which prioritizes pinot noir, the estate’s Spécial Club is a blend of 70 percent chardonnay and 30 percent pinot noir: in 2009, the chardonnay is from Dizy, Hautvillers and Aÿ, while the pinot noir is entirely from Dizy. It’s broad in build and supple in texture, showing an unusual nuance and detail for the vintage, and it’s seamlessly harmonious from start to finish, deftly balancing both power and finesse. This is impressive, driven more by a sense of place and expression of terroir than anything else, and it promises to develop even more complexity with time. (***)”*

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

“It’s a roaring bellowing Club and I lost my heart to it. This wine always has a crazed minerality, and this one’s like a “normal” 2009 stretched taut, and someone flicked a switch on a machine that shoots a lightning bolt between two poles; it’s like phosphorescent, wailing, shrieking chalk, napped with a nage of lemon rind. (++)”

- Terry Theise, Importer

PIERRE GIMONNET CUIS

2010 Champagne “Special Club” (Pierre Gimonnet) \$ 98.00 \$ 83.30

“This icon-wine of the Côte des Blancs is compelling and unusual in 2010, largely focused on its green elements (balsam, wintergreen) and florals (osmanthus and lilac) and less on its savor—which makes sense from 2010, an incisive but seldom generous year. Yet there is a curious warmth that emerges on the finish here, alongside an intricate minerality. In bud form now, this delicate chiseled wine is a masterpiece of sensual logic, not (yet) of revelry. And it tastes wonderful. (++)”

- Terry Theise, Importer

2008 Champagne “Millesime de Collection–Special Club” (Pierre Gimonnet) \$120.00 \$ 102.00

*“I was almost afraid to taste this! But eventually I had to, and I observed, as calmly as I could, my mind being blown. An apogee of precision, mineral, balsam and oolong, graphite and pepper, dandelion greens—and that’s before the fruits and flowers are accounted for, or the elegant texture, or the remarkable endless finish. **A classic in the making. Simply great Champagne—don’t miss it. (+++)**”*

- Terry Theise, Importer

2008 Champagne “Fleuron” (Pierre Gimonnet).....MAGNUMS ...\$210.00 \$ 178.50

*“One of the great values of this season, **this Fleuron is simply otherworldly**; gorgeous aromas, patisserie; it’s all here, core, length, chalk, flowers, focus, light-footed intensity; the empty glass smells of pure Chouilly. Young mags can sometimes be shrill, but not this guy! It’s 33.5% Cramant, 32.5% Chouilly, 10% Oger, 22% Cuis and 2% Vertus. (+++)*

- Terry Theise, Importer

MARC HÉBRART MAREUIL-SUR-Aÿ

*“Jean-Paul Hébrart has been in charge of this estate since his father, Marc Hébrart, retired in 1997. Hébrart’s wines have a broad appeal: if you like to think about your wines, they’re intellectually engaging enough to satisfy you; on the other hand, if you’re just looking to drink, they’re simply delicious. The wines are full and generous without being weighty, complex and soil-driven without being demanding. **Overall, the entire range is of consistently high quality, and Hébrart is quickly becoming one of the finest grower estates in the Grande Vallée.** Happily, his wines also represent excellent value for the money, at least for the moment.”*

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

*“I’ll use an old coinage I didn’t invent but which I find helpful: **Marc Hébrart may not be the “best” grower in Champagne, but no one is better.***

This was brought home in dramatic fashion a few weeks ago while tasting his vins clairs, which were the 4th group of young pre-tirage Champagnes I saw that day, as we made this, our 7th visit overall. Sitting in Jean-Paul’s mint-condition tasting room with its expanse of natural light and its lyrical view to the Marne canal, I got the second of the wines in my glass and was so amazed, literally amazed, I said out loud “I mean, shit; even his vins clairs are in a class by themselves.” Nods of assent and smiles around the room.

Jean-Paul Hébrart, (or “JP” as he is known to his wife), was always a wonderful producer. When I began with him, the wines really walked a scintillating edge between strength of fruit and the utmost etching of flavor, so that you got deliciousness and precision. But now I think JP is in the zone, and the man has reached that odd silent place where every note you play is true (even the ones you didn’t think you could grab) and every swing you take hits the ball square.”

- Terry Theise, Importer

2012 Champagne “Spécial Club” (Marc Hébrart) \$ 105.00 \$ 89.25

“Fifty-five percent of this is pinot noir from Mareuil and Aÿ, while the remaining 45 percent is chardonnay from Mareuil, Oiry and Chouilly. **The nose alone is authoritative and demanding**, showing a deep, almost muscular concentration characteristic of the vintage yet remaining elegantly refined, without any impression of excess. **It’s vivid, energetic and very long on the palate**, still wound up in its youthful exuberance, and it should enjoy a long and slow development in the cellar. (***)” – Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

“The wine stole into the market late last year and I could only glance at it; this was my first real taste. **It immediately takes its place among the elite Club bottlings in the 20 years I’ve been doing this**, Gimonnet 2002 and 2008, Chiquet 2008, Hébrart’s own 2002 and 2008, and to me **it offers every single thing we can wish for from young Champagne**.

An astonishing fragrance, a little like the 2006, actually. Masterly and serene, with a freaky-long finish that runs a pure fruit throughout its many octaves and registers. Ur-fruit and all fruits, with chalk as a discreet fellow-traveler, but only at first; with the second pour the chalk soars to the front. For a wine of such repose this has hyperactive interplay, like somebody doing an incredibly complicated trick and making it look easy. (+++)

– Terry Theise, Importer

2012 Champagne Blanc de Noirs – “Noces de Craies” (Marc Hébrart)..... \$ 115.00 \$ 97.75

“This is the inaugural release of Hébrart’s blanc de noirs, made from a selection of parcels in Aÿ, all planted with vines over 40 years old. **It’s vivid and expansive, showing a sleek, elegant structure and concentrated, resonant depth of fruit**. Despite its youth, it’s already marked by a subtle, nuanced complexity, enlivened by a vibrant chalkiness, and it finishes with superb length and finesse. It demonstrates the nobility and sophistication of the terroir, and it immediately claims a place as one of the best expressions of Aÿ available today. (***)”

– Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

“**It’s the best Blanc de Noirs I have ever tasted.**

Last year I pre-screened a sample without dosage and found it immensely promising. The promise has been kept. It’s not a wine JP will make every year; in fact the next one isn’t until vintage-2015.

It means “wedding of chalk” and is the fruit of his passion for Pinot Noir. Massale selection of 44-year vines, hailing from five parcels (Cheuzelles, Longschamps, Pruche, Chauffour, Les Pierres Robert), and it’s also a Coeur de Cuvée.

It shows all the creamy malty grace of great Aÿ allied to a jet-blast of manic chalkiness, with incomprehensible length and command. A gliding titan of Champagne. (+++)

– Terry Theise, Importer

2010 Champagne “Rive Gauche - Rive Droite Grand Cru” (Marc Hébrart).. \$ 165.00 \$ 140.25

“Half of this blend is pinot noir from Aÿ, while the other half is chardonnay from Oiry, Chouilly and, for the first time, Avize. Compared to Hébrart’s Spécial Club, this appears a little more closed, perhaps due to its vinification in barrel. Ultimately, though, it’s an even finer and more precise wine than the Club is, showing a vibrant, intense depth of fruit flavor yet feeling racy and sleek in structure. Its elegant texture is reflective of grand cru chardonnay, and it finishes with terrific length and complexity, anchored by a fragrant, saline chalkiness. (***)”

– Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

LANCELOT-PIENNE CRAMANT

Champagne “Cramant Grand Cru” (Lancelot-Pienne)..... \$ 45.00 \$ 38.25

PIERRE MONCUIT LE MESNIL

“The Moncuit family has been growing vines in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger since the late 19th century. The estate owns 15 hectares spread over 20 different parcels. Nicole Moncuit always makes each wine from a single vintage, without any reserve wine, ‘in order to preserve typicity and terroir,’ she says. These are precise, deliberate wines, feeling reserved and slightly stern without being overly austere. I find the wines to be cleanly harmonious, expressive and fine, with a pronounced chalkiness and a tightly focused, linear character that’s classic for Le Mesnil.”

– Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit) \$ 48.00 \$ 40.80

Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit) 375ML.. \$ 28.00 \$ 23.80

Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit)MAGNUMS.. \$ 110.00 \$ 93.50

Rosé Champagne “Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit) \$ 55.00 \$ 46.25

2006 Champagne “Le Mesnil Grand Cru” (Pierre Moncuit) \$ 75.00 \$ 63.75

JACQUESSON DIZY

“What is most admirable about Jacquesson today is that it was already a highly respected Champagne house, widely considered to be one of the greatest in the region, and yet in the belief that they could do even better, the Chiquet brothers decided to radically revamp their entire production, not an insubstantial risk. Beginning with the 2000 vintage, they discontinued their non-vintage Perfection Brut, reinterpreting it as the Cuvée No. 728, as it represented the 728th blend created in the history of the house. Every subsequent year, a new, numbered cuvée is released: 729, 730, 731 and so forth. The idea of these numbered cuvées is to emphasize the character of the base vintage, blending it with a small percentage of reserve wines for completeness and harmony yet allowing the vintage character to set the tone for the wine each year. This is in a sense antithetical to the traditional concept of a non-vintage champagne, which is blended to create a consistent style of wine from year to year. “We don’t want to make a consistent blend every year,” says Jean-Hervé Chiquet. “We want to make the best possible blend every year.”

Jacquesson’s wines are complex and richly textured, demonstrating a substantial depth of fruit that’s amplified by vinification in large wooden casks and highlighted by their unusually low dosages. At the same time, these wines show a keenly fine texture and harmonious elegance. **The 700-series is proving to consistently be one of the best non-vintage bruts on the market.**”

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

Champagne “Cuvée 740 – Extra Brut” (Jacquesson) \$ 70.00 \$ 59.50

“The Cuvée 740, based on the 2012 vintage, is superb. Rich, ample and creamy, yet with striking translucence, the 740 has it all. A classic Jacquesson Champagne, done in the house’s contemporary style, the 740 is a rare young Champagne from this house that will drink well with no cellaring at all. Pastry, orchard fruit, spice, dried flowers and chamomile all flesh out in the glass, but **it is the wine’s exceptional balance that places it among the region’s top bottles.** The 740 marks another stylistic shift for Jacquesson in which the preference is to focus more on the character of a specific vintage by lowering the amount of reserve wines from the 30% range, where it has been, to around 20%, where it is now. The 2012 portion is a blend of fruit from vineyards in Aÿ, Dizy, Hautvillers, Avize and Oiry. Dosage is 1.5 grams/liter. (94/100)”

- Antonio Galloni, Vinousmedia.com

Champagne “Cuvée 738 – Extra Brut” (Jacquesson) \$ 70.00 \$ 59.50

“Based on the 2010 harvest, with 33 percent of reserve wines, this blend contains 61 percentage chardonnay, 21 percent pinot meunier and 18 percent pinot noir. It contrasts a rich body and ample depth of flavor with a racy spine of acidity, its tense structure accentuated by its low dosage of 2.5 g/l. Chardonnay is clearly apparent in both flavor and texture, imparting a lovely sense of finesse, and **the balance on the palate is terrific.** While it’s showing well now, it’s still very youthful in character, so don’t be afraid to leave this in the cellar for a while. (*(*))”

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

J-M SÈLÈQUE PIERRY

This is the newest addition to our stable of high-quality artisan Champagne producers. Young Jean-Marc Sèlèque is the third generation to run this small Champagne house in Pierry on the outskirts of Epernay. With 7.5 hectares in Pierry, Moussy, Epernay, and four nearby villages, he produces just 5400 cases per year. He is particularly focused on sustainable farming, because he says it gives him the best raw material to work with. He is certainly doing things right. We were blown away by both his Brut and Brut Rosé. They are both architecturally perfect (tiny bubbles, lively acidity, refreshingly dry), and at the same time absolutely delicious. And very well-priced.

Champagne “Solessence” (J-M Sèlèque) \$ 48.00 \$ 40.80

“A blend of 50 percent chardonnay, 45 percent meunier and 5 percent pinot noir, this comes from seven different villages, and reserve wines account for 50 percent of the blend. It’s fresh and lively, feeling rich in texture without needing a lot of body or weight. Its bright flavors of pear, grapefruit and raspberry are supported by brisk acidity, and it finishes with fine length and aroma, **balancing intellectual appeal with hedonistic drinkability.** (*(*))”

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

Rosé Champagne “Solessence” (J-M Sèlèque) \$ 55.00 \$ 46.75

“This rosé is based on Sèlèque’s Brut, blended with 15 percent of exceptionally ripe pinot noir. It’s deep crimson in color, and while it’s relatively delicate in weight on the palate, it packs an intense depth of raspberry, redcurrant and strawberry flavor, feeling bright and lively. **It’s invitingly delicious, keeping you coming back for more.** (*(*))”

- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

MOUTARD BUXEUIL

Champagne “Grande Cuvée” (Moutard).....	\$ 36.00	\$ 30.60
Rosé Champagne “Rosé de Cuvaison” (Moutard).....	\$ 40.00	\$ 34.00

RUELLE-PERTOIS MOUSSY

2008 Champagne “Blanc de Blancs - Grand Cru” (Ruelle-Pertois)	\$ 58.00	\$ 49.30
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VILMART RILLY-LA-MONTAGNE

“Wood-aged base wines give these Champagnes distinctly Burgundian flavors. **Often described as the best grower in Champagne or the poor man’s Krug.** Vilmart’s wines can offer a resonance and majesty unique among small estates. At best, wines are grandiose and resplendent. With sufficient bottle-age these can take you up and up into rare altitudes of complexity.”
- Terry Theise, Importer

Champagne “Grand Cellier” (Vilmart).....	\$ 85.00	\$ 72.25
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“The new edition of this is 50% 2014 and 25% each 2013 and 2012. **The best young Grand Cellier in many years.** It bears mentioning that many tasters find this wine hugely impressive and high-impact. (+)”
- Terry Theise, Importer

“The majority of chardonnay in the blend gives this a pronounced finesse, particularly in the wine’s suave, silky texture. Its creamy depth of fruit is supported by a sleek, energetic structure, feeling vibrant and complex, and it finishes with rare subtlety and detail. **Is this the best Grand Cellier ever? It’s exceptionally expressive and complete, for sure.** (**)”
- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

Rosé Champagne “Rubis” (Vilmart).....	\$ 105.00	\$ 89.25
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“This is made of 90 percent pinot noir and 10 percent chardonnay, with 10 percent of the pinot noir vinified as red wine. It combines a juicy succulence with a lithe, elegant build, feeling composed and refined. Disgorged in October of 2015, **it’s showing superbly well now,** and I would drink it while the fruit is still vibrant and fresh. (**)”
- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

2012 Champagne “Grand Cellier d’Or” (Vilmart)	\$ 110.00	\$ 93.50
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“This is a blend of 80 percent chardonnay and 20 percent pinot noir, fermented in a mixture of barriques and larger demi-muids. True to the vintage, it feels concentrated and dense in flavor, yet it balances this so well, **its rich depth of fruit anchored by saline chalkiness and enlivened by a tense, vibrant structure.** It’s silky in texture and complex in character, unfolding with subtle, nuanced length on the finish. **This is superb,** but it’s still painfully youthful: put it in the cellar and be patient with it. (***)”
- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

2010 Champagne “Grand Cellier d’Or” (Vilmart)	\$ 115.00	\$ 97.75
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“Oh man: yes yes yes! This takes the sinewy profile of 2010 and uses it to stir these flavors with steel; **insanely vivid and incisive; whippy and tight but sexy and feline; like drinking Champagne with a lynx.** Never had anything like this. (++)”
- Terry Theise, Importer

2010 Champagne “Grand Cellier d’Or” (Vilmart).....MAGNUMS ..	\$ 315.00	\$ 267.75
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“Laurent Champs holds his magnums in the cellar for an additional two years before release, and this extra lees aging, combined with the larger format, gives the wine a silkier texture and a more seamless complexity compared to the same wine in bottle. This was disgorged in October of 2015, and a year and a half later it feels resonant and expressive, poised between youthful vitality and a mature depth of expression. Hold it if you have patience, as it promises to develop even further with time. (**)”
- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

2008 Champagne “Coeur de Cuvée” (Vilmart).....	\$ 175.00	\$ 148.75
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“A great cuvée in a great vintage brings high expectations, and Vilmart’s 2008 **Coeur de Cuvée is just as spectacular as its pedigree might indicate.** A blend of 80 percent chardonnay and 20 percent pinot noir, all from old vines in the vineyard of Blanches Voies, it shows both the concentration and the energy of the vintage, expanding with resonant depth and detailed layers of flavor. It’s still painfully youthful, needing long aging to fully reveal itself, but it’s clear that this is a grand wine, and one that’s well worth waiting for. (***)”
- Peter Liem, ChampagneGuide.net

“The good news is it’s a great CdC. Early days, and I (sincerely) don’t like to hype, but contrasted with the magnificent 2007 there’s just more depth here. Laurent could have made an explosive wine; 2008 allows it. Instead, bless him, he’s made a gorgeous one. (++)”
- Terry Theise, Importer

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VVW News
2017 Holiday Extra

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