

Worksheet Eighteen

THE VILLAGES AND VINEYARDS OF THE MOUNTAIN

A luxurious number of possible tastings could accompany this chapter, either within each region of the Mont, or comparing the regions. But this tasting will concentrate on the ancient villages which have always had the highest status on the mountain: Ambonnay, Bouzy, Verzenay and Verzy.

From each of these, select one vigneron with champagne derived from Grand Cru *terroir* and compare it with Champagne Chartogne-Taillet from Merfy, a 'less favoured' village. Use as a reference a master blender, such as Piper-Heidsieck, based in Reims, or Canard-Duchêne from Ludes. For a single bottle selection, look at the dominant characteristics of the villages in the table further down, and select what interests you.

SUGGESTIONS

Ambonnay

- » Marie-Noëlle Ledru Brut NV 15% Ambonnay Chardonnay, 85% Ambonnay Pinot Noir
- » Eric Rodez Cuvée Les Crayères Grand Cru Brut NV 45% Ambonnay Chardonnay, 55% Ambonnay Pinot Noir
- » Paul Déthune Brut Grand Cru NV 30% Ambonnay Chardonnay, 70% Ambonnay Pinot Noir

Bouzy

- » Paul Bara Brut Réserve Grand Cru NV 20% Bouzy Chardonnay, 80% Bouzy and Ambonnay Pinot Noir
- » Paul Clouet Brut Grand Cru NV 20% Chouilly Chardonnay, 80% Bouzy Pinot Noir

Verzenay

- » Michel Arnould Brut Tradition Grand Cru NV 100% Verzenay Pinot Noir
- » Jean Lallement Brut Tradition NV 20% Verzenay Chardonnay, 80% Verzenay Pinot Noir
- » Pehu-Simonet Brut Sélection Grand Cru NV Verzy, Verzenay and Sillery fruit, 30% Chardonnay, 70% Pinot Noir

Verzy

- » Cuperly Grande Réserve Brut Grand Cru NV 40% Verzy and Verzenay Chardonnay, 60% Verzy and Maily Pinot Noir
- » Penet-Chardonnet Réserve Grand Cru Extra Brut Verzy and Verzenay Blend of one-third Chardonnay and two-thirds Pinot Noir or Rosé Grand Cru Extra Brut Same blend

Merfy

- » Chartogne-Taillet Cuvée Ste Anne NV 39% Merfy Chardonnay, 47% Merfy Pinot Noir, 14% Merfy Meunier

Reference champagne

- » Piper-Heidsieck NV 15–20% Chardonnay, 55–60% Pinot Noir, 20–25% Meunier or
- » Canard-Duchêne Brut NV 25% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir and Meunier, 40% Meunier

Champagnes	Dominant characteristics of each village's wine	I detect
1.	Ambonnay: Fruit, power, depth, smoke, approachability, full body, layered	
2.	Bouzy: Rich, weighty, seems alcoholic, powerful bouquet, concentrated	
3.	Verzenay: Rich, peppery, lively, powerful, gunpowder, stoniness	
4.	Verzy: Similar to Verzenay but more supple, with flinty edge	
5. Chartogne-Taillet	Merfy: Delicacy, minerality, white flowers and fruits, freshness	
Canard-Duchêne Brut NV or Piper-Heidsieck	Blend of villages: Balance, elegance, complexity?	

My preference

Drink-all-night style

Most complex