

## Worksheet Thirty Five

# SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED: 'THE GROWERS' KRUG'

The Vilmart signature – well structured with complex aromas, ample richness, generous fruitiness, freshness and length – distinguishes all its wines. A lone imbibor should try a bottle from the middle of the list for a proper introduction to this House's style. Note that the 'Cœur de Cuvée' Vintage should be opened to allow aeration in advance of tasting.

- » Vilmart Grande Réserve NV
- » Vilmart 'Grand Cellier' NV
- » Vilmart 'Grand Cellier d'Or' Vintage
- » Vilmart 'Cœur de Cuvée' Vintage
- » Vilmart 'Cuvée Rubis' NV

### Vilmart Grande Réserve NV

30% Chardonnay, 70% Pinot Noir

A blend of two years (25–50% reserve wines), fermented and aged for ten months in large oak barrels; no malolactic fermentation, minimum 3–4 years on lees. This and the rosé are Vilmart's only Pinot-dominant cuvées. Dosage is year dependent.

Appearance
Clarity
Colour
Effervescence
Aromas
Condition
Intensity
Characteristics
Complexity
Palate
Attack
Balance
Body
Flavour
Texture
Length
Influence of wood?
Conclusion

## Vilmart 'Grand Cellier' NV

70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir

The grapes are selected from Les Hautes Grèves and Les Basses Grèves *lieux-dits* in Rilly-la-Montagne). A blend of three years (50% reserve wines), fermented and aged for ten months in large old oak barrels; no malolactic fermentation, minimum 3–4 years on lees. Dosage is year dependent.

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## Vilmart 'Grand Cellier d'Or' Vintage

80% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir

Grapes from the same *lieu-dits* as above, but selected from older vines than the 'Grand Cellier' NV.

Fermented then aged for ten months, a third in five-year-old small barrels, a third in six-year-old barrels, a third in seven-year-old barrels; no malolactic fermentation, 5–7 years on lees. Dosage is year dependent.

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## Vilmart 'Cœur de Cuvée' Vintage

80% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir

Choicest grapes are selected from the *lieu-dit* 'Blanches Voies' ('White Tracks'), where Vilmart's vines are well in excess of 50 years old. 4000 kg of grapes are pressed, which would normally yield 2050 litres of juice, but only 800 litres of the juice is reserved from the middle of the pressing (the heart of the cuvée) to make this champagne. Fermented, then aged for ten months, a third in two-year-old small barrels, a third in three-year-old barrels, a third in four-year-old barrels; no malolactic fermentation, 5–7 years on lees. Dosage year dependent.

The 'Cœur de Cuvée' has been one of Champagne's cult wines since Tom Stevenson pronounced the 1991 'one of the three greatest champagnes made in the last 25 years'. The difficult 2001 vintage also received the highest praise, as did the acclaimed 2002. Cellaring for at least three years is recommended.

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## Vilmart 'Cuvée Rubis'

10% Chardonnay, 90% Pinot Noir

Vinified as red wine (*saignée*); a blend of two harvests fermented and aged in large *foudres*; no malolactic fermentation, 3 years on lees. Dosage is year dependent.

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<b>Influence of wood?</b>
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If you were to group the champagnes into style families, how would you do that?

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