

## Worksheet Thirty Seven

# WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Wines for the tasting are:

- » Pol Roger 'Pure'
- » Pol Roger Blanc de Blancs Vintage
- » Pol Roger Brut Réserve
- » Pol Roger Brut Vintage
- » Pol Roger Rosé Vintage
- » Pol Roger Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill Vintage

Although any of these wines are a happy choice for a single bottle tasting, the Blanc de Blancs Vintage would be a superb selection. Wines always undergo MLF.

### Pol Roger 'Pure'

*Approximately 33% Chardonnay, 33% Pinot Noir, 33% Meunier*

One of the most successful incarnations of the zero-dosage style, this NV blend comprises one-third of each of the grape varieties, but selected in such a way that the profile is one of subtlety and finesse. Extended lees time of 3½–5 years softens the acidity to gentle freshness. After short aeration, delicate florals and spice make up the aromas, while the refreshing palate is accompanied by saline influences and a savoury note, plus a lingering touch of minerality. Reserve wines drawn from at least 3 years provide structure and perfect balance between flavour and acidity. Texturally, the wine is a salivating treat. This champagne is great as an aperitif, or served with sashimi, sushi or crispy whitebait.

### Pol Roger Blanc de Blancs Vintage

*100% Chardonnay*

An outstanding example of a Grand Cru Chardonnay blend from the Côte des Blancs, with hallmark Pol Roger ripe fruit. It spends 9 years on lees and is always cellarable for several years. Refined, poised and balanced, it generally opens with aromas of white flowers, vanilla, brioche and toasted almonds, followed by some delightful citric intensity and a long, chalky, mineral-driven finish. Bottled under lower pressure than normal results in a very supple mouthfeel even when the wine is young. Highly recommended.

Dosage around 10g/L but year dependent.

### Pol Roger Brut Réserve

*Approximately 33% Chardonnay, 33% Pinot Noir, 33% Meunier*

Composed of 30 base wines drawn from at least 2 vintages, using equal quantities of the 3 main grape varieties. Only the grapes' first pressing is used. Reserve wines, and 3–5 years on lees (remember, the minimum is 15 months) ensure the hallmark Pol style – round, moussy, creamy, bready, fruity (white fruits, citrus), refined, enticing, light, elegant, generous, complex. Fresh, with a touch of quince and aldehydic interest after aeration, this champagne is always enjoyable and more than just a crowd pleaser.

Dosage 6–12g/L, depending on the blend.

## Pol Roger Brut Vintage

*40% Chardonnay, 60% Pinot Noir*

Grand and Premier Cru fruit. The juice undergoes 2 cold settlings before fermentation to preserve the wine's delicate fruit characters, and subsequently spends about 9 years on lees. Rich, pungent or spicy dishes are well handled by the strong Pinot backbone. Floral and poached pear aromas lead into toasted almond, pastries and lemon butter with honey, a velvety texture, and a long aromatic finish of juicy acidity and perfect balance. A favourite.

Dosage around 9–10g/L but year dependent.

## Pol Roger Rosé Vintage

*35% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, 15% added red wine*

Made from Grand and Premier Cru vineyards in the Montagne de Reims and the Côte des Blancs. After 7 years on lees an intense coppery-pink colour develops, alongside aromas of ripe red berries. The champagne is lively, refreshing, light, with some peach, dried apricot and a touch of mint. Fine acidity precedes a long finish with a touch of minerality. It is cellarable, food-friendly for shellfish, cheese and not too chilli-driven Asian food. Maurice Pol-Roger refused to drink this champagne!<sup>1</sup>

Dosage around 9–10g/L but year dependent.

## Pol Roger 'Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill' Vintage

*Pinot Noir-dominated blend*

The blend's exact components are a closely guarded secret. It spends over 10 years on its lees. This is champagne made in a very traditional style, closer to what Pol Roger, Maurice Pol-Roger and Winston Churchill enjoyed, and made in honour of Churchill. The grapes are all Grand Cru from vineyards that were producing grapes for Champagne Pol Roger during Churchill's lifetime. First conceived in 1975, then stored 33 metres below street level at 9°C, its first release was in magnums in 1984. Gentle airing reveals powerful, mature, rich and complex champagne. It is long-lived, harmonious and outstanding in every way.

Dosage about 8g/L, year dependent.

For each champagne, decide whether or not you agree with its description.

## Pol Roger 'Pure'

Is this a successful example of balanced champagne to you? .....

Gentle florals .....

Saline influence .....

Texturally juicy .....

Mineral length .....

Food matches .....

Your Comments .....

.....

**Pol Roger Blanc de Blancs Vintage**

- Refined .....
- Poised .....
- White flower aromas .....
- Vanilla .....
- Brioche .....
- Toasted almonds .....
- Citric .....
- Chalky mineral finish .....
- Fresh .....
- Harmonious .....
- Your Comments .....
- .....

**Pol Roger Brut Réserve**

- Round .....
- Moussy .....
- Creamy .....
- Bready .....
- White fruits .....
- Citrus .....
- Refined .....
- Welcoming .....
- Light .....
- Elegant .....
- Complex .....
- Generous .....
- Fresh .....
- Quince .....
- Aldehydes .....
- Enjoyable .....
- Comments .....
- .....

**Pol Roger Brut Vintage**

Delicate fruit characters .....  
Pinot Noir dominance .....  
Floral aromas .....  
Poached pear .....  
Toasted almonds .....  
Pastries .....  
Lemon butter .....  
Honey .....  
Velvety texture .....  
Aromatic length .....  
Balancing acidity .....  
Your Comments .....  
.....

**Pol Roger Rosé Vintage**

Red berry aromas .....  
Lively .....  
Fresh .....  
Light .....  
Peach .....  
Dried apricot .....  
Mint .....  
Minerality .....  
Food matches .....  
Your Comments .....  
.....

**Pol Roger 'Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill' Vintage**

Powerful .....  
Rich .....  
Mature .....  
Complex .....  
Harmonious .....  
Aromas and flavours .....  
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Your Comments .....  
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**ENDNOTES**

1. McNulty, Henry, *Champagne*, The Paul Press, London, 1987, *op. cit.*, p.100.