

Worksheet Thirty Eight

SINGLE-VINEYARD CHAMPAGNES; TÊTES DE CUVÉE AND CUVÉES DE PRESTIGE

Comparisons between paragons is a dissatisfying affair; tasting many at once, side by side, is about as compelling as eating many boxes of fine chocolates in one sitting. All the same, great chefs love to create special dishes to accompany the best or most characterful champagnes. People unwrap choice bottles, or remove them from their luxury boxes, as special treats on birthdays, weddings and anniversaries. Prestige champagnes mark milestones of all kinds, as people hope that the anticipation and mystique of a great wine will be matched by a fabulous tasting experience. Dedicated amateurs begin with a long wish-list of select bottles, and hope to drink many in advance of the grim reaper.

The material covered in the chapter yields suggestions for many possible tasting options.

Groups could choose a representative bottle from each group. Lone tasters could choose just one bottle and download a tasting worksheet from the collection in the Appendix.

1. Single-vineyard blanc de blancs champagnes

- » Agrapart & Fils 'Vénus' Vintage
- » David Léclapart 'L'Apôtre' Vintage
- » Jean Milan 'Cuvée Terres de Noel' Vintage
- » Larmandier-Bernier 'Vieille Vigne de Cramant' Vintage
- » Pierre Peters 'Cuvée Les Chêtillons' Vintage
- » Tarlant 'La Vigne d'Antan' Non-Greffée Chardonnay Vintage
- » Veuve Fourny 'Clos Faubourg Notre Dame' Vintage

2. Vintage blanc de blancs *cuvées de prestige*

- » Charles Heidsieck 'Blanc des Millénaires'
- » Deutz 'Amour de Deutz'
- » Lanson 'Noble Cuvée' Blanc de Blancs
- » Taittinger 'Comtes de Champagne'

3. Single-vineyard blanc de noirs champagnes

- » Egly-Ouriet Grand Cru Blanc de Noirs 'Vieille Vignes Les Crayères' NV
- » Nicolas Maillart 'Les Francs de Pied' Blanc de Noir Vintage
- » Tarlant 'La Vigne d'Or Blanc de Meuniers Vintage

Or blends of the grape varieties

- » Emmanuel Brochet 'Le Mont Benoît' NV
- » Veuve Fourny 'Les Rougesmonts' Vintage

4. 'Special Club' vintages

Choose one from this selection of makers:

- » A. Margaine
- » Lorient-Pagel
- » Gaston Chiquet
- » Marc Hébrart
- » Henri Goutourbe
- » Paul Bara
- » J. Lassalle
- » Pierre Gimonnet
- » Launois

5. Cuvées de prestige blends of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir

- » Boizel 'Joyau de France'
- » Duval-Leroy 'Femme de Champagne'
- » Joseph Perrier 'Cuvée Joséphine'
- » Lanson 'Noble Cuvée' Brut

6. A cuvée de prestige in a class of its own

- » Philipponnat 'Clos des Goisses' Vintage

	Champagne 1	Champagne 2
Appearance		
Colour, bubbles - describe it		
Points out of 3		
Aromas		
Aroma Quality		
Points out of 5		
Taste		
Body/ texture		
Balance sugar/acid		
Flavour		
Finish/ length		
Points out of 6		
Quality		
Points out of 3		
Preference		
Points out of 3		
Points score out of 20?		

	Champagne 3	Champagne 4
Appearance		
Colour, bubbles - describe it		
Points out of 3		
Aromas		
Aroma Quality		
Points out of 5		
Taste		
Body/ texture		
Balance sugar/acid		
Flavour		
Finish/ length		
Points out of 6		
Quality		
Points out of 3		
Preference		
Points out of 3		
Points score out of 20?		

	Champagne 5	Champagne 6
Appearance		
Colour, bubbles - describe it		
Points out of 3		
Aromas		
Aroma Quality		
Points out of 5		
Taste		
Body/ texture		
Balance sugar/acid		
Flavour		
Finish/ length		
Points out of 6		
Quality		
Points out of 3		
Preference		
Points out of 3		
Points score out of 20?		

Clos? Single-vineyard? Single-village? Do you have any thoughts on your discoveries, any marked preferences?

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From the *New York Times*' Eric Pfanner¹

- » 'It's not really possible to make a great champagne without blending,' said Nicolas Chiquet, who, with his brother, runs the family-owned estate Gaston Chiquet, which blends the produce of more than thirty vineyard plots.
- » There are also disappointments. Violaine de Caffarelli, an oenologist at the CIVC, the Champagne trade organization, put it well, saying that single-vineyard champagnes 'are clearly terroir wines, but some of them seem to have been created to answer the question, "Is there terroir in Champagne?"'

From Champagne Professional and Writer Giles Fallowfield²

Many *Champenois* are convinced that great Champagne comes only from blending together different component parts and however interesting single vineyard or single varietal wines (those made from just one grape variety) may be, they will never reach the heights achieved by Champagne's greatest blends.

ENDNOTES

1. Eric Pfanner, *The New York Times Dining & Wine*, *Champagne With a Capital 'C'*, December 9th, 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/10/dining/10iht-wine10.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
2. <http://www.champagneguru.co.uk/a-guide-to-champagne/the-art-of-blending/>