



Written by
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Champagne and sparkling wine - a compilation



See our guide to all of this season's compilations. See also these recent tasting articles about fizz: [English wine trumps champagne](#) and [these verticals of de luxe champagnes](#).

Jancis writes: We approach the season of celebration with this collection of roughly 100 tasting notes on blends of wine and carbon dioxide. The majority of them are champagnes - a mix of brands and growers' wines - but there are quite a few sparkling wines from elsewhere too. Note the wide variety of prices in the champagne section.

We include notes on the full current Armand de Brignac range, with some of these wines designed to retail at almost £700 a bottle. The A de B winemaker, the very un-flashy, soft spoken Alexandre Cattier (pictured here) has been making the blends for both the family firm

Cattier and the rappers' favourite Armand de Brignac (owned by Jay-Z since November 2014) for 13 years.

The Armand de Brignac range still doesn't include any vintage-dated wine but they have recently launched a Blanc de Blancs and a Demi-Sec and acknowledge that they may launch a vintage Blanc de Noirs. 'Our focus was on nightlife', Cattier told me rather gravely when showing their current wines, 'but now we're trying to focus on daylife too, especially in high-end restaurants.' The brand has always had a very active US importer and Cellar Trends is their UK importer. The launch of Blanc de Noirs involved a grand total of 3,000 bottles, of which 40 cases of six were allocated for each of the UK and France.

This brand with its flashy metallic bottles had its genesis around the turn of the century when Alexandre's father had the idea to build up a new brand. His mother had been reading a novel with a character called M Brignac so she called her new cuvée de Brignac. Then the CIVC, the champagne governing body, told them they couldn't call it that because there are two villages called Brignac in France. It was Alexandre's aunt who suggested adding Armand. The distinctive metal-covered bottle was modelled on a special product they made for the couturier Courrèges in the mid 1990s.

Armand de Brignac was launched in 2005/6. See my description of my first encounter with it, in 2009, in [Armand de Brignac - tasted!](#) The brand benefited enormously when rappers who had publicly embraced Roederer Cristal turned to A de B after Jay-Z launched a boycott of Cristal after some possibly misinterpreted comments (acknowledged as 'perfectly timed' by Cattier) by Frédéric Rouzaud of Roederer. Jay-Z made a video in Monaco in 2006 in which Armand de Brignac featured for two seconds but it launched the brand. Cattier were mystified by the whole thing 'but we know we sent 24 bottles to a hotel in Monaco in 2006 - and they were paid for' Alexandre Cattier told me.

Apparently Cattier make the selection of grapes for Armand de Brignac right from the picking - and the best grapes go to this luxury brand. Alexandre's seven-year-old son is apparently called Armand but - honestly - this is purely coincidental. It just happened to be the one name he and his wife both liked.

The approximately 100 tasting notes below are divided into champagne and the rest, by colour and then in descending score order.

CHAMPAGNE

- [Dom Pérignon, Brut 2006 Champagne](#) Launched October 2015. Very tightly knit. On the nose one of the most characteristic Dom Pérignons to have come my way for a while (though two much more mature examples offered a similar marriage of introversion and sensuality). Both pungently smoky and tense with some broad brioche notes as well as a suggestion of lime zest. On the palate it's quite a contrast to all the Extra Bruts I have been tasting recently! Much richer on the palate entry though there is delicate lemon-cream refreshment on the mid palate. Very fine bead and satisfying aftertaste that builds even if I'm pretty sure this aspect of the wine will become more emphatic with time in bottle. Bravo! 12.5% Drink 2016-2026
18.5
- [Philipponnat, Clos des Goisses 1996 Champagne](#) This unusual single-vineyard wine looked a very pale orange and had the most complex, developed and extraordinary nose that reminded me of maple syrup - not something I have ever smelt in a wine before. Great combination of

tension and richness. Very easy to like this. Drink 2010-2022

18.5

- **Armand de Brignac, Blanc de Noirs NV Champagne** 100% Pinot Noir from Cattier vineyards and Bouzy and Verzenay. Mainly 2008 plus 2007 and 2006. This is the launch cuvée so there was no hurry to release it. They are aiming this at restaurants. Nicely evolved nose. Pale straw. Intense, complex bouquet and yet still very fine acidity. Rather beguiling featherlight finish. Really quite a delicate wine, this unusually ambitious Montagne de Reims bottling. Drink 2015-2020
£695 Harrods 18
- **Artéis & Co, Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2002 Champagne** 1,690 bottles produced, disgorged August 2013 (as per the back label), dosage 3 g/l.
Deeply mature aromas of brioche and buttery nuts, with a hint of clementine and almost caramel, though the residual sugar is low. Really finely textured and tastes as if the dosage were higher, thanks to the rich, developed, biscuity quality. Even with all that richness it is still fresh and vivacious. A delicious combination of mature flavour and youthful energy and freshness with the final elegance of a blanc de blanc on the finish. (JH) Drink 2014-2020
18
- **Armand de Brignac, Demi-Sec NV Champagne** Disgorged early 2015. To be launched Nov 2015 targeting restaurants. Same blend as Gold (40% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 20% Pinot Meunier). Based on 2007 with 2005 and 2004. Skipped 2006 because the brand was just starting. Dosage 35g/l. Alexandre Cattier claims this matches spicy food very well - Thai? Blue cheese too. Very fruity, ambitious, evolved nose. Dense and with some toastiness. Great balance. Zesty and substantial. I could easily imagine this accompanying a luxurious meal. Very well made with fully integrated sugar. Alexandre Cattier claims that in a blind tasting you would take it for a Sec rather than a Demi-Sec. Drink 2015-2020
£375 Harvey Nichols from Nov 2015 18
- **Artéis & Co, Brut 2002 Champagne** All premier cru vineyards. 50% Chardonnay from Vertus, 50% Pinot Noir, from Tauxières, Chigny and Vertus. Disgorged Dec 2014, dosage 4 g/l.
Wonderfully creamy citrus with the richness of the 2004 but seems fresher and more coiled. It went extremely well with a scallops and smoked onion starter. There's a very slight hint of honey, possibly even ginger as it opens up, tastes dry and very fresh, with extremely fine mousse. Both complex and delicious. **GV** (JH) Drink 2015-2022
£39.95 RRP 17.5
- **Artéis & Co, Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2004 Champagne** 100% Chardonnay from premier cru Cuis. Disgorged Dec 2014.
There's a hint of lime freshness on the nose, driving pure citrus elegance on the palate. Terrific concentration and length. Tangy, tense and elegant, opening up in the glass to complex aromas that are smoky, biscuity and even slightly herbal, broadening out as it warms up a little. (JH) Drink 2015-2024
£89.95 RRP 17.5
- **Alexandre Penet, Extra Brut 2006 Champagne** The small print seems to suggest this was made at a co-op in Reims. 50% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Meunier, 20% Pinot Noir. Dosage 6 g/l.
Heady nose with a hint of elderflower; richer than most of the wines I have tasted from this producer. Intense and persistent. 12% Drink 2013-2018
17.5
- **Louis Roederer 2004 Champagne** Lots of richness and development on the nose - quite a contrast to the much more youthful Dom Pérignon 2004 tasted the day before - and yet this is still tightly wound on the palate. Lemon and cookie dough are the two strongest impressions for me. A beautifully balanced young wine that is SO much more expressive than its stablemate Cristal 2007 just launched! This has really come on in bottle. 12.5% Drink 2013-

2021

17.5

- **Egly-Ouriet, Millésimé Brut Grand Cru 2005 Champagne***106 months on lees, disgorged mid 2015.*
Honey and butterscotch aroma. Apricot brioche – smells like a pâtisserie in the best way! Full and rich but so fresh, deeply, richly flavoured with toasty breadth. Long and satisfying - a meal in itself. And all kept youthful by a sour freshness at the very finish. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2020 Imported into the UK by Roberson 17.5
- **Moët & Chandon, MCIII Brut NV Champagne***This is the first release of Moët's latest all-singing, all-dancing construction. The III in the name refers to three strata and three 'universes' because it is a blend of wines made in steel, in oak and in glass. Using the language so typical of Moët's theatrical approach to marketing, there are three strata: 37-40% is the first stratum, which is 50/50 Chardonnay/Pinot Noir from the 2003 vintage fermented and aged in steel. Then there's 37-40% of the second stratum, ie Grand Vintage blends from the 1998, 2000 and 2002 vintages that have been partially aged in large oak casks, and then preserved in stainless steel vats. Finally there's 20-25% of the third stratum, which are 'remise en cercle' champagnes from the Grand Vintage Collection (from 1993, 1998 and 1999) which have been aged in bottle, disgorged and matured in the house's cellars in Épernay. The idea is to create layers of complexity. All in all, 10 years on lees, 7 components, 7 vintages and 7 g/l dosage. The UK allocation is 100 bottles!*
Subtle, creamy and lightly spiced. Lightly honeyed and smoky. Some green apple, but not as tart as that suggests. There is a definite sour aspect to the freshness. It does have real complexity. 'Not a one-way champagne'. Much more of a wine than a champagne. Creamy, fresh, a little like white burgundy. Does have real depth and persistence. And a freshness that is not just acidity. Though there is freshness in acidity. The wine seemed to have very little mousse and I don't know if that was the glass or the wine. (JH) Drink 2015-2025
£330 RRP 17.5
- **Egly-Ouriet, Tradition Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne***Ambonnay. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.*
Perhaps slightly reductive on the nose. But it opens to a rich honeyed aroma with a touch of ginger and green tea. Full of flavour and still with a tight intensity. (JH)12.5% Drink 2015-2020
£43.50 Lea & Sandeman 17.5
- **Armand de Brignac, Gold NV Champagne***This comes in a gold metallic bottle. Disgorged June 2015. 40% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir, 20% Pinot Meunier. Based on 2010 with 2009 and 2008. Mainly premiers and grands crus but no claim is made on the label. Dosage 9-10 g/l.*
Quite deep straw. Very steady tiny bead. Complete, well balanced nose with a floral note. A tiny bit of astringency and great verve. Not quite as defiantly dry as the Blanc de Blancs. Some delicacy on the finish but it's quite powerful on the mid palate. . Drink 2015-2018
£250 Selfridge's, Harvey Nichols, Hedonism, Harrods, The Champagne Co, Amazon.co.uk 17
- **Artéis & Co, Brut 2004 Champagne***50% Pinot Noir from Chigny and Vertus, 50% Chardonnay from Vertus. Disgorged Dec 2014, dosage 4 g/l.*
Creamy and on the rich side, spreading across the palate, the depth of flavour making the acidity seem relatively soft (for champagne), though in a second glass, much cooler, the wine seemed to tighten up and be much fresher. Light note of yeast and vanilla. Changes interestingly in the glass. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2020
£39.95 RRP 17
- **Deutz, Brut 2008 Champagne***Putty, bready nose. Youthful very crisp palate. Not heavy - quite delicate. Long and confident. I suspect it will be even better next year. 12% Drink 2016-2022*
£43 The Wine Society 17
- **J Dumangin, Premier Cru 2004 Champagne***Chardonnay, Pinot Noir. Pale straw, glinting. Smells very youthful, with citrus and a light note of blossom even with an invitingly creamy brioche*

quality. Dry and with a definite grip on the finish, accentuated by the very crisp acidity. Deep and satisfying but also packed with vitality and a very fine mousse. **GV** (JH)

12% Drink 2015-2020

£39 Yapp 17

- **Penet-Chardonnet, Les Epinettes Extra Brut Grand Cru 2009 Champagne***Disgorged February 2014. Verzy single-vineyard Pinot Noir from 40-year-old vines. No malolactic.*
Mid gold with a very fine bead. Rich nose with a flattering floral perfume and a combination of depth of flavour and delicacy of texture on the palate. Hint of green apples too. Very lively and vivacious. Drink 2015-2015
17
- **Penet-Chardonnet, Les Blanches Voies Extra Brut Grand Cru 2010 Champagne***All Chardonnay from one vineyard in Verzy. No malolactic conversion. Dosage 5 g/l. Fewer than 1,000 bottles filled. To be launched late 2015.*
Playful, very ripe fruit that can easily handle this low dosage. Chalky perfume with notes of putty. Nice balance and a particularly neat finish. Long. Vivacious and persistent. Not too demanding. Drink 2015-2019
17
- **Perrier Jouët, Belle Epoque 2007 Champagne***Dense and zesty, Very confident build and a good combination of fruit, autolysis and freshness. Good balance and a wine that it ready to savour. My only reproach is that it doesn't really linger on the palate.* Drink 2014-2019
£125 RRP Harvey Nichols 17
- **Henriot, Le Souverain Brut NV Champagne***Lot number suggests this was disgorged in August or January 2015.*
Meaty, savoury densely knit nose (this wine generally benefits from a full three years on the lees). Real substance and refreshment with, apparently, the Chardonnay from the superior villages in the Côte des Blancs the dominant force. Very sprightly. A superior champagne with a future. 12% Drink 2015-2019
£35 RRP Fortnum & Mason and a wide range of independents 17
- **Egly-Ouriet, Tradition Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne***48 months on lees. Disgorged June 2015.*
Inviting honeyed brioche flavours. Rich and toasty on the palate but with finely balanced acidity. Full flavoured but not brash. (JH) Drink 2015-2017
Imported into the UK by Roberson 17
- **Pol Roger, Brut 2006 Champagne***Quite deep gold with a tiny bead. Exuberant, complex nose - passion fruit? Hint of minerals. Broad and quite rich but this wine seems to have a lower dosage than some recent Pols. Pretty exciting stuff. Lots of effort seems to have gone into this. Vaguely salty finish. Tense and fun.* Drink 2015-2023
17
- **Moët & Chandon, Grand Vintage Brut 2006 Champagne***Current vintage on the market. Next will be 2008. Sunny and dry in July, grapes ripened quickly. Cold and rainy August with some disease pressure, especially on the Meunier - but the yield was quite high so they could be selective. Needed precision in harvesting. 7 years on lees (increase from the previous practice of 5 years - hard to persuade the accountants), dosage 5 g/l (lower than before), disgorged Oct 2013.*
First sample was completely lacking in mousse - maybe it was the glass. Second one better. Clean, pure and citrusy, very direct, lean and dry-tasting. A little creamy, straightforward. Full and creamy in the mouth, fresh and with a slight grip on the finish. Good length and slightly nutty on the finish. (JH) Drink 2015-2020
17
- **Moët & Chandon, Grand Vintage Collection Brut 1999 Champagne***Collection wines = later disgorgement. 38% Pinot Noir, 31% Chardonnay, 31% Pinot Meunier. Disgorged April 2008.*

Dosage 6 g/l.

Lightly honeyed on the nose. Dense and rich and soft but with a bitter freshness on the finish. Good depth and length. (JH) Drink 2014-2020

17

- **Alain Thiénot, Cuvée Stanislas Blanc de Blancs Brut 2006 Champagne** *Named after Alain Thiénot's son Stanislas. Mainly from Avize, Oger and Cramant. Dosage 8 g/l, disgorged June 2015.*
Very pale gold. Surprisingly big bubbles. Intense and mature aroma that is toasty and yeasty but also ripe like apricots and even a touch of honey, almost a little buttery. Broad and rich on the palate, some clementine depth but real lemony freshness on the finish, drawing it in after the initial richness. Crisp, clean blanc de blanc tension and elegance on the finish after all the breadth on the mid palate. Overall more flavour-rich than elegant but it is certainly mouth-filling. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2020
£68 RRP 17
- **R & L Legras, Présidence Vieilles Vignes Blanc de Blancs Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *Deep breadly nose. Full flavoured, broad and mouth-filling but still with a core of freshness. Seems youthful even with this complex yeasty depth. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2020*
£45.95 Lea & Sandeman 17
- **Mailly, Blanc de Noirs Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *100% Pinot Noir. Silvery gold. Cool stony nose. A rigorously upright spine of lemon chalk, assertive intensity, like a particularly precise, exacting, Sadler's Wells ballet teacher. Fine boned and light on its feet, yet there is firm power. Very good. (TC) 12% Drink 2015-2020*
17
- **Alexandre Penet, Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *100% Chardonnay part fermented in oak casks. Dosage less than 5 g/l.*
Pale straw. Very savoury and serious - almost white burgundy-like - on the nose with the subtlest of hints of oak. Clean and bracing. Not a trace of sweetness but not as uncompromisingly austere as some bottlings from this producer. Complete on the palate with a persistent and hugely satisfying aftertaste. Great balance. 12.2% Drink 2014-2018
17
- **Penet-Chardonnet, Les Fervins Extra Brut Grand Cru 2009 Champagne** *Disgorged 2014. From a single 20-year-old vineyard planted with 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay.*
Tight, dense, tiny bead. Bone dry. Still youthful with less of the opulence of 2009 in evidence than in Les Epinettes but with very convincing persistence and width on the finish. Promising for the future. 12% Drink 2016-2020
17
- **R & L Legras, Chouilly Blanc de Blancs Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *Correct and spicy nose. Masses of acidity and very true and without artifice. Needs time. 12.5% Drink 2015-2020*
£28.50 Lea & Sandeman 16.5+
- **Armand de Brignac, Blanc de Blancs NV Champagne** *Disgorged June 2015. Blend of 2010 with 2009 and 2008. Mainly premier and grand cru vineyards. Dosage 9-10 g/l.*
Pale gold. Savoury nose. Very dry, almost solid. Fine fizz. A big beefy wine that I would not have guessed was a Blanc de Blancs. Still quite youthfully chewy. Perhaps demand is forcing a release a little earlier than ideal? Drink 2015-2019
£525 Harvey Nichols 16.5+
- **Lallier, R 012 NV Champagne** *Disgorged February 2015. Based on the 2012 vintage with 62% Pinot Noir and 38% Chardonnay, 85% of the blend coming from grand cru villages. This bottling launches this producer's Série R Collection with the R denoting the year of the principal vintage in the blend. This one is made up of 81% 2012, the rest being from 2002, 2004 and 2008. Winemaker-owner Francis Tribaut bought the house from the Lallier family in*

2004. His policy is to disgorge the blend monthly 'to maintain freshness and emphasise the wine's vibrant fruit flavours.'

Full bodied and bumptious. Broad lemon-cream sensation. Quite evolved and fair value from this house based in Aÿ. 12.5% Drink 2015-2017

£30 RRP UK importer Boutinot 16.5

- Alexandre Penet, Extra Brut NV Champagne Excellent background given on the back label of all this producer's wines. 40% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir, 30% Pinot Meunier. Dosage 6 g/l. Very brisk mousse. Flirtatious, floral nose. Real lift and zest. Rather transparent - nothing like the density of the Brut Nature Grand Cru from the same producer. Featherlight, in fact. Very pretty and winning. Racy. Drink 2014-2017
16.5
- Veuve Fourny, Blanc de Blancs Premier Cru NV Champagne From a 40-year-old premier cru vineyard. Pungent, well priced, tight and dense. Lemon spume. Quite youthful. **GV** 12% Drink 2015-2019
£21.50 The Wine Society 16.5
- Vilmart, Grande Réserve Premier Cru NV Champagne Disgorged October 2014. 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay. Admirably complex nose for the price. A hint of oak? Mouth-filling with great juicy, super-fresh fruit and neat acidity. Great balance for current drinking. A very serious, well-made wine. Neat and long. No fancy tricks, just harmony. Though not that tightly laced. **VGV** 12.5% Drink 2015-2015
£27.99 Virgin Wines 16.5
- Mailly, L'Intemporelle Brut Grand Cru 2009 Champagne 60% Pinot Noir, 40% Chardonnay. In a clear glass bottle. Very bright yellow! An elegant tightly strung bead which comes gently apart in the mouth as if a string of pearls had been cut. Creamy sweet brioche with a little bit of hawthorn blossom, aromas that follow through to the palate and then crisp up towards the end in a long grapefruit-laden finish. Quite a bit of sweetness, which is very well balanced, but I think this would benefit from a canapé or a parmesan crisp to accompany it. (TC) 12% Drink 2015-2022
16.5
- Mailly, Exception Blanche Brut Grand Cru 2002 Champagne 100% Chardonnay, 50% of which comes from their own vineyards. Dosage 6 g/l. Pale straw gold. Boldly lemon-infused baking notes, warmly comforting yet sharp, like lemon-marmalade cake. Steady mousse. High citrus tension yet somehow quite solid with more than a bit of chew through to the finish. Lots there, if not the most elegant. (TC) 12% Drink 2015-2020
16.5
- Mailly, Réserve Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne 75% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay. Almost pinkish gold. Honeysuckle and a faint note of strawberry shortcake lifting off a rather charming nose. The palate is more reserved: orange peel, savoury and spiced. Tart but densely packed. Slight sternness of structure and deep timbred. Better with food than without. (TC) 12% Drink 2015-2019
16.5
- Dosnon, Récolte Brute Brut NV Champagne Disgorged June 2014. Dosage 4 g/l. Salt and honey on the nose. Rich and toasty. By far the best balanced of all the Dosnon champagnes I have tasted today. Just dry enough but the flavour is still full and generous. Tastes pretty mature. (JH) 12% Drink 2015-2017
Imported into the UK by Roberson 16.5
- Moët & Chandon, Grand Vintage Collection Brut 1993 Champagne 30% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir, 20% Pinot Meunier. Disgorged 2011. Dosage 7 g/l.

Not very aromatic. But smoky and toasty on the palate. Rich but not particularly zesty.

(JH)Drink 2013-2020

16.5

- Alexandre Penet, Brut Nature Grand Cru NV Champagne 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay and five years on the lees.

Lively mousse. Impressive development on the nose - a really substantial wine, to judge from the nose. Savoury and super serious. Not for the faint-hearted. Absolutely bone dry and the opposite of juicy. But very interesting ... in a pretty demanding idiom. Drink 2014-2018

16

- Penet-Chardonnet, Cuvée Diane Claire Brut Nature Grand Cru NV Champagne Disgorged Feb 2014. A blend of two-thirds Pinot Noir and one-third Chardonnay based on the 2002 vintage.

Very deep gold. Steady mousse. Toasty nose with considerable autolysis in evidence and real lift. Quite transparent and bone dry on the end. Fairly uncompromising but there is some delicacy here. I wonder whether the wine wouldn't be improved by a little dosage to carry the autolysis effects? A good wine for lovers of the style but slightly too much like hard work given what I'm sure were stunning raw ingredients back in 2002. Drink 2014-2017

16

- Penet-Chardonnet, Terroir Escence Extra Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay from Verzy and Verzenay. Based on 2010 and disgorged 28 July 2014.

Light nose and very marked acidity. Pretty delicate and many palates will find this just a bit too tart at present. Demanding. Lots of good intentions but perhaps a bit too particular for some. 12% Drink 2016-2019

16

- Penet-Chardonnet, Grande Réserve Grand Cru NV Champagne Disgorged Jan 2013. Grand Cru Verzy. A blend of two-thirds Pinot Noir and one-third Chardonnay based on the notorious 2001 vintage and aged for eight years.

Quite a deep gold. Quite an open nose reminiscent of a mature Meursault! Relatively loose in texture with marked acidity. Brave and obviously conscientiously made. But I suspect the acidity will always be the hallmark of this wine. Pretty dry finish. Well-intentioned but not, in the end, the deliverer of that much pleasure. Drink 2014-2016

16

- Ployez-Jacquemart, Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2005 Champagne Very fine bead. Some development on the nose. But a little light on the palate without real concentration. Clean and fresh but not ultimately hugely satisfying. Rather dissolute finish. 12% Drink 2013-2017

16

- Ployez-Jacquemart, Liesse d'Harbonville Brut 1999 Champagne Oak fermented. Serious, savoury, bone dry nose. This is only a Brut but it tastes like an Extra Brut. Very composed and sedate, this is not an exuberant wine, despite the vintage. The oak fermentation seems rather to have suppressed the fruit. It's an intellectual wine with a very dry finish. Something to mull over at the dinner table perhaps. 12% Drink 2013-2017

16

- Ployez-Jacquemart, Passion Extra Brut NV Champagne Here's what the producer's website says about this bottling, which I assume is up to date: *Extra Brut Passion is made up of Premier and Grand Crus grapes picked in the 2004 harvest (55% Pinot Noir, 5% Pinot Meunier and 40% Chardonnay). In order to add greater structure a third of the wine is matured in oak barrels and does not undergo malolactic fermentation. To create further complexity we add 25% of older wines. This Champagne spent at least four years maturing in our cellars.'*

Explosively intense aroma on pouring. Very brisk acidity and rather unknit and very slightly astringent on the palate. But it is certainly refreshing enough and the finish is convincing. 12% Drink 2014-2018

- **Laurenti, Grande Cuvée Brut NV Champagne** A grower's champagne from Les Riceys and, true to current trends, it is not cheap. Very tight bead and quite a rich nose. Appley and just a little open and rustic. Very honest but the Vilmart wine at £2 less from this retailer looks much more sophisticated. Baked-apple aromas. A little sweet on the finish. 12% Drink 2014-2017
£29.99 Virgin Wines 16
- **Dosnon, Récolte Blanche Brut NV Champagne** *Disgorged May 2015, dosage 6 g/l. 100% Chardonnay, fermented and aged in oak.*
Lively fruit – green fruit and stone fruit combined and a toasty autolytic character plus some spice, perhaps from the oak. Honeyed on the palate, even some apricot. Again this tastes decidedly off dry on the palate even though the dosage is just 6 g/l. Just not my taste though it has both flavour and freshness. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2018
Imported into the UK by Roberson 16
- **Perrot-Batteux, Cuvée Hélix Blanc de Blancs Brut Premier Cru NV Champagne** Lightly toasty and a hint of green apple on the nose. Frothy mousse, quite broad, almost a little honeyed and you can feel a slight sweetness on the finish – but the acidity is there to balance. Broad and tasty. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2017
£24.95 Stone, Vine & Sun 16
- **Perrot-Batteux, Hélix Nature Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature NV Champagne** The toasty quality is more marked here than in the Cuvée Hélix Brut, on the nose at least. Big bubbles, a bit cedary on the palate. Acidity sticks out a bit on the finish so that the Brut seems better balanced, although this might work better with food. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2018
£29.75 Stone, Vine & Sun 16
- **Dosnon, Récolte Noire Brut NV Champagne** *7 g/l dosage, disgorged Oct 2014. 100% Pinot Noir, oak aged.*
Light creamy toasty aroma. Off dry, zesty and better balanced than the straight Dosnon NV Brut but the dosage sweetness still dominates the finish, hence the minus. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2017
Imported into the UK by Roberson 16-
- **Mailly, Extra Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *75% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay.*
Mid straw gold. Fine persistent mousse. White grapefruit, Seville orange peel and shortbread without the sweetness. Some bitter pith on the long finish. Quite sepulchral in its dry aloofness. Defined by structure and bony elegance. (TC)12% Drink 2015-2018
15.5
- **Gremillet, Brut NV Champagne** Just a hint of cardboard on the nose but some real interest considering the very low price. I think it could get a bit tiring after one glass and there's a suggestion of dosage distracting from some pretty green fruit. But it's fair value for a wine with the C-word on the label. **GV**12% Drink 2015-2016
£23.99 Virgin Wines 15.5
- **G H Mumm, Cordon Rouge Brut NV Champagne** *The lot number suggests this may be a bottling disgorged in January 2015.*
Lively froth. Light but layered, quite intriguing nose. Very mouthfilling froth, open rather than tight-knit. and a bit astringent on the finish. Seems a bit expensive. Sweet and sour. 12% Drink 2015-2017
£32-35 Most UK supermarkets 15.5
- **Dosnon, Henri Dosnon Sélection Brut NV Champagne** *Champagne Dosnon is a 'micro-négociant' from the Côte des Bars. This is made with bought-in fruit.*
Slightly odd dairy aroma, much fresher on the palate but, like the Veuve Borodin Brut just tasted, it finishes too sweet for my taste. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Roberson 15.5

- **Gimonnet Gonet, Cuvée Or Grand Cru NV Champagne** *Grower in Le Mesnil, not to be confused with Pierre Gimonnet of Cuis.*
This was not a particularly good bottle alas. The nose may have been affected by low-level TCA and the dosage seemed a bit heavy and the wine didn't taste as though it had grand cru nerve or density. It's a good price but I'm not sure it's great value. 12% Drink 2015-2016
£23.50 Your Sommelier (flash sale 9-21 Dec 2015) 15.5
- **Marc Chauvet, Tradition Brut NV Champagne** Good persistent tiny bead. Fresh, clean nose and some cooking apple flavour on the palate. Decent sugar/acid balance. Not that substantial but then there is nothing especially jarring about this. Mouth-filling. A fair price and better than many a supermarket own brand. 12% Drink 2015-2016
£24 The Real Wine Co 15.5
- **Marc Chauvet, Sélection Brut NV Champagne** Aged on the lees for three years. Supposedly a blend of superior base wines. Quite ethereal nose and drier and lighter than the Tradition bottling. Tastes as though there is more Chardonnay in the blend; it's a bit flyaway and transparent. Acidity very apparent. I actually think this might be more tiring to drink in quantity than the basic Tradition cuvée even though it is less solid. 12% Drink 2015-2016
£27.50 The Real Wine Co 15.5
- **Veuve Borodin, Brut NV Champagne** Aspirin note on the nose and tastes really quite sweet. Too sweet and a bit dilute. Makes me want to go and brush my teeth. (JH) 12% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Roberson 15

ROSÉ CHAMPAGNE

- **Ruinart, Dom Ruinart Rosé 1990 Champagne** The fully mature nose has a certain vegetal quality but the palate manages to be both sweet and refreshing. Very beguiling. Drink 2009-2018
17.5
- **Egly-Ouriet, Rosé Brut Grand Cru NV Champagne** *48 months on lees, disgorged July 2015.*
Plenty of red fruit on the nose - mostly the orange-skinned Victoria plum. Tight, dry-tasting and quite vinous on the palate. Half wine - half champagne. Satisfying depth and length but with freshness and fine mousse. Very good with some potential to age in bottle. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2020
Imported into the UK by Roberson 17
- **Artéis & Co, Rosé Brut 2007 Champagne** *41% Chardonnay from grands crus Chouilly and Avize, 49% Pinot Noir from grands crus Mailly, Verzenay and Verzy and premiers crus Avenay and Mutigny. 10% red Pinot Noir from Avenay and Verzy. Disgorged Nov 2013, dosage 6 g/l.*
Marked red-fruits aroma, lightly spiced, then something more exotic like mango - aromatically complex. Tastes very dry and a little saline. Long and extremely fresh. (JH) 12% Drink 2015-2018
£55.95 RRP 17
- **Armand de Brignac, Rosé NV Champagne** *Disgorged July 2015. 50% Pinot Noir, 40% Pinot Meunier, 10% Chardonnay. A rosé d'assemblage. Mainly 2010 with 2009 and 2008.*
Pale rose pink with a hint of tomato colour. They add about 16-17% red wine from Verzenay, Mailly and Bouzy. This does actually smell a little like roses. Serious nose. The palate is a bit more youthful and demanding than the nose suggests. I would ideally keep this a year or two. I love the nose. Drink 2016-2018
£350 Selfridge's, Harvey Nichols, Hedonism, Harrods, The Champagne Co, Amazon.co.uk
16.5+
- **Penet-Chardonnet, Terroir** *Escence Rosé Brut Nature Grand Cru NV Champagne* *Disgorged July*

2014. Blend of grand cru plots in Verzy and Verzenay. 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay based on the 2009 vintage.

Deep rose pink. Steady mousse. Flirtatious lift on the nose with much more character than most pink champagnes - even a suggestion of rose petals scents - but then a bone-dry finish. The juice is virtually sucked out of the palate! This is a rosé to drink with food, I think. Very austere finish indeed. Drink 2015-2016

16

- Gimonnet Gonet, Rosé NV Champagne Very, very pale tomato colour indeed. Very pretty colour but the nose doesn't sing. In fact it seems a bit muddy. Like the white wine from the same grower, this seems a bit on the sweet side, although this (just) pink wine is astringent on the finish too. 12% Drink 2015-2016

£25 YourSommelier.co.uk flash sale 9-21 December 2015 15

- Alexandre Penet, Extra Brut NV Champagne 40% Chardonnay, 35% Pinot Noir, 25% Pinot Meunier. Dosage 6 g/l.

Very pale tomato colour. What shame! A bad case of TCA. Rotten corks ... and from the look of this cork it was only quite recently inserted. Drink 2014-2017

10

WHITE SPARKLING WINE

- Quartz Reef, Méthode Traditionnelle Brut NV Central Otago 58% Pinot, 42% Chardonnay. Minimum 24 months on lees but up to 36 - this was disgorged April 2015.

Dry. Wonderfully inviting nose - the fruit is on the riper side but there's also a delicate lees autolytic character that you don't always get on New World fizz. Pretty dry, plenty of citrus fruit and a fine, elegant mousse with just a light yeasty note on the finish. Complete and refined. Very good indeed. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2019

17

- Bellavista, Brut 2009 Franciacorta A touch more developed on the nose than the Alma Brut NV. Attractive dusty, stony freshness over the bright lemon fruit. Subtle yeasty notes and perhaps some oak influence? Or is that just a cedary freshness? Creamy texture, fine mousse and well balanced. Seems relatively gentle. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2014-2018

£39.99 RRP Imported by Liberty 17

- Longridge, Méthode Cap Classique Brut 2009 Stellenbosch 100% Chardonnay. Spends over five years on fine lees.

Very pale gold. Aromas of lemon cream and shortbread. Bit of astringency, a lively tap-dancing mousse. Lots of fresh lemon and pith and white flowers. Despite its five years on the lees it tastes much fresher and more youthful than its NV stablemate. Tight and firm with lots of depth. (TC) 12% Drink 2015-2021

17

- Luis Pato, Metodo Classico Bruto 1992 Bairrada 60% Baga, 40% Maria Gomes grown on sandy soils. Base wine fermented in new oak for 3 months. Disgorged 2009. Luis Pato stumbled across some cases of this in his cellar, much to my delight.

Glorious colour of burnished gold. Smells of barley sugar and sour but caramelised apricots. There's still a slight fizz but it has all sorts of deeply complex flavours of long ageing in bottle. Caramelised apricot, chamomile. There's an unexpected lushness to this, though it tastes just off dry. It has an oxidative character but is not oxidised. Bitter orange on the finish and amazing length. A pretty miraculous relic. (JH) 13% Drink now

€17.50 RRP 17

- Longridge, Chardonnay/Pinot Noir Méthode Cap Classique Brut NV Stellenbosch 82%

Chardonnay from Devon Valley in Stellenbosch, 18% Pinot Noir from Elgin. Hand-picked early in the morning, whole bunch-pressed into stainless steel tanks for two nights' settling at 3 °C. Chardonnay was racked to second-fill French oak barrels for fermentation and the Pinot Noir was racked and fermented in stainless-steel tanks. The wines then went through malolactic fermentation and stayed on the gross lees for five months before being bottled for the second fermentation. 40 months on the fermentation lees.

To my surprise, this NV Brut was a deeper gold and richer on both the nose and the palate than their vintage 2009. Evolved and broad and creamy, caramelised butternut and warm sour-dough bread. The bubbles persistent but slightly loose knit and languid, an edge of Seville marmalade on the finish. Delicious and very ready to drink. Proper champagne-style fizz. Enough body to have with food and not just as an aperitif. (TC)12.5% Drink 2015-2017
17

- **Exton Park, Bretagne Blanc de Blancs 2011 England***First ever vintage. Chardonnay grown on a 55-acre vineyard on chalk downlands in Hampshire, from the oldest plot (planted 2003). Just 2,500 bottles produced. Winemaker Corinne Seely. 3 years on lees, disgorged March 2015, dosage 9 g/l.*
Intense and distinctive nose, of orange and apricot and apple even a little peach – surprisingly fruit-intense - but also a touch smokily reductive. Creamy, rich citrus on the palate, very high acidity. A slight creaminess and richness to the texture contrasting with the acidity, which is really mouth-watering but just balanced by the dosage. Refined and distinctive style - with real style. It opens and develops in the glass too. (JH)11.5% Drink 2015-2021
£39.95 RRP 17
- **Villiera, Pinot Meunier Méthode Cap Classique Brut 2010 Stellenbosch***An experimental wine that was not a great success in SA because so few have heard of Pinot Meunier – but it has apparently done well in the UK, so they may continue with it.*
Smells denser than the Chardonnay/Pinot blend, if density can smell of anything. Gently toasty, some Victoria plum fruit and great harmony – dry-tasting freshness without austerity. I'd easily mistake this for champagne for its complexity and finesse. Very good. (JH)13% Drink 2015-2018
£15+ imported by Dreyfus Ashby 17
- **Juvé y Camps, Cinta Púrpura Brut Reserva NV Cava***Yeasty, fragrant and clean. Precisely defined apple fruit, soft and supple and very fresh. Gets lots of broadness and flesh into the glass.* (RH)12% Drink 2015-2016
16.5
- **Bellavista, Alma Brut NV Franciacorta***Simple but bright citrus aroma, some green-fruit freshness, even a little cedary. On the palate, richer and deeper. Fine mousse and a definite lees/yeast richness. Tastes as if there is slight sweetness on the finish but balanced by super-crisp acidity. Impressive concentration.* (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2017
£33.99 RRP Imported by Liberty 16.5
- **G D Vajra 2014 Moscato d'Asti***Headily perfumed and more elegant than the Contero Moscato di Strevi just tasted. More gentle. Seems more fizzy too. Freshness is well balanced with the grapey sweetness.* (JH)5.5% Drink 2015-2016
£14.99 RRP imported by Liberty Wines 16.5
- **Villiera, Tradition Méthode Cap Classique Brut NV Stellenbosch***50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir.*
Cool citrus aroma – very spring like. But also a hint of something creamy. Lovely on the palate, elegant, subtle but with a very good balance of fruit and light notes of autolysis – very slightly bready. Delicate but not at all weedy. (JH)13% Drink 2015-2016
£15+ imported by Dreyfus Ashby 16.5
- **Nyetimber, Tillington Single Vineyard Brut 2009 England** *Pinot Noir in one of their new (second*

crop, planted 2006) vineyards stood out. Needed a little bit, 21%, of Chardonnay from the same vineyard. This bottle was disgorged back in March after only just over a month on lees. All malo. TA 8 g/l, RS 11 g/l. Just a few thousand bottles made.

Well balanced, intriguing nose. Very well balanced and mouthfilling. Very lovely nose - just a little hard on the finish. But maybe the final cuvée will be a little more graceful. Neat finish. Pretty light nose but a good, well-balanced one. Maybe the sweetness is a little obvious on the finish. Launched in 2013. I suggest they keep lots to submit for blind tastings.12% Drink 2013-2018

16.5

- Pirie, Apogee Brut 2011 Tasmania Made by Andrew Pirie. Excellent autolysis on the nose and some serious textural knitting on the palate. Dry finish. Tight. Not cheap but very good. Very neat.12% Drink 2014-2017
£34.95 Berry Bros & Rudd 16.5
- Spiropoulos, Ode Panos Sparkling Moschofilero 2013 Mantinia Organic grapes. Quite peppery, spicy on the nose. Mineral/stony but still with the variety's aromatics. Impressive on the palate, fine citrus intensity, elegant mousse and extremely long with a finish that is both fresh and creamy. A little sweet on the finish (RS is 13.8 g/l but the pH is 3.03) but that's more a matter of taste. **GV** (JH)11% Drink 2014-2016
£18.30 Maltby & Greek 16.5
- Juvé y Camps, Reserva de la Familia Brut Nature Gran Reserva 2011 Cava 35% Macabeu, 55% Xarello, 10% Parellada. Aged 36 months on lees. Minimum 2 months between disgorgement and release.
Creamy apple and pear aroma, not especially intense and not notably autolytic, perhaps a little sour like quince. Opens up to more apricot. Very dry with a slight aspirin bitterness increasing the overall freshness. Bubbles are quite big but reasonably persistent. Certainly some sign of the lees in the depth of texture but they have not really given an autolytic character. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2018
£19.50 RRP 16.5
- Gusbourne, Berry Bros & Rudd 2011 England Sweet creamy nose, dry and textural on the palate with pure apple fruit and lovely elderflower scent. Moderate length, soft palate, fine acidity. (RH)12% Drink 2015-2018
£24.95 Berry Bros & Rudd 16.5
- Luis Pato, Vinha Formal Single Vineyard Brut 2013 Portugal *Experimental wine? Dark bottle with gold foil. 60% Cercial, 40% Bical.*
Pale lemon. Delicious aroma - ripe lemons, a hint of orange. Fine mousse. Dry tasting and with a stony quality that is more about texture than flavour, almost chalky. Lemon-flavoured soluble aspirin on the finish. Tighter and more linear than the 100% Cercial, perhaps not quite as deep but more flirtatious. Again, super-refreshing. (JH) Drink 2015-2016
16.5
- Ruca Malén, Brut NV Uco Valley 75% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Noir.
Fresh and clean. Quite assertive. Admirably crisp. Very good.13.2% Drink 2014-2016
£15.91 Corney & Barrow 16.5
- Luis Pato, Vinha Formal Single Vineyard Cerceal Brut 2013 Portugal *Experimental wine? 100% Cercial. Clear bottle with black foil.*
Pale straw. Intense aroma of biscuity/creamy citrus and just a hint of something cedary. Super-dry and zesty. Direct and deeply refreshing with a firmness to the texture. Clean, energetic and long. Bubbles much bigger than on the Vinha Formal blend. (JH) Drink 2015-2016
16.5
- Bride Valley, Blanc de Blancs 2013 England Smells very zesty with a hint of grassy freshness at first. On the palate, intense citrus purity. Refined, dry-tasting and persistent. Creamy on the

mid palate with the acidity shot through the middle. I suspect this will develop very well in the bottle, given the chance. (JH) 11.5% Drink 2015-2020

£34.99 RRP Imported by Liberty 16.5

- **Nyetimber, Classic Cuvée Brut 2008 England** For the first time lightweight bottles and full malo were employed and the nose, and palate, are a big improvement on the tart 2007 and 2004. Much broader palate impact with acidity down to under 10 g/l. A difficult year and not the greatest complexity but perfectly acceptable. 12% Drink 2012-2017
16
- **Contero 2014 Moscato di Strevi** Gorgeously grapey with a touch of orange too. Sweet and grapey on the palate, pretty and just as it should be. Deliciously aromatic, sweet and fragrant. (JH) 5.5% Drink 2015-2016
£14.99 RRP imported by Liberty Wines 16
- **Sentio, Extra Dry NV Prosecco** Another pale wine. Smells like Prosecco - a bit too much eau de toilette. But much more substance on the palate than the first two Proseccos tasted. Proper apple fruit, proper mid-palate presence. Hint of lemon but it's not as bone dry and punishing as I was expecting, thankfully. It works. Good balance. (TC) 11% Drink 2015-2016
£12 Haslemere Cellar 16
- **Borgoluce, Superiore Extra Dry NV Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene** Ripe citrus aroma, quite intense. Don't be fooled by the Extra Dry in the name because that means 12-20 g/l residual sugar. There's a softening creamy texture and the fruit intensity gives a sensation of sweetness in addition to the actual sweetness so the overall effect is medium dry. (JH) 11.5% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Flint Wines 16
- **Borgoluce, Rive di Collalto Brut Nature 2014 Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene** Delicate nose of citrus and spring blossom. Slight grip on the palate, tastes pretty dry, as you would expect with zero dosage. A bit abrupt on the finish. (JH) 11.5% Drink 2015-2017
Imported into the UK by Flint Wines 16
- **Frezza, Val Mesdi Frizzante NV Prosecco** Fragrant and a touch grapey. Creamy lemon flavour. Easy, plenty of fruit. Slight grain in the texture adds length. (JH) 11% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Flint Wines 16
- **Frezza, Col dell Orso Extra Dry NV Prosecco** Less immediately fruity than the Val Mesdi but still fresh, lively and with more flavour on the mid palate than many a Prosecco, helped by the touch of sweetness, and quite persistent. (JH) 11% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Flint Wines 16
- **Drusian, Superiore Extra Dry NV Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene** Quince, herbs and a touch of aspirin. This really has a lot more fruit depth than most Proseccos at this price. Medium dry but finishes fresh. Well priced, just a slight sensation of boiled sweets on the finish - but I'd rather this than the more bland style that seems so common now Prosecco is everywhere. (JH) 11.5% Drink 2015-2016
£12.50 Stone, Vine & Sun 16
- **Muga, Conde de Haro Extra Brut 2012 Cava** *Rioja's Bodegas Muga makes tiny quantities of this sparkling wine from Viura grapes with a touch of Malvasia.*
Lots of interest. The bubbles aren't the tightest, or the acid the highest, but the flavours are great. **GV** 12.5% Drink 2015-2017
£11.95 The Wine Society 16
- **Zuccardi, Blanc de Blancs 2008 Mendoza** *54 months on lees. All Tupungato Chardonnay. £9.95 a glass in Gaucho restaurants.*
Pretty impressive for Argentina. Bone dry. Well done. Quite delicate and savoury. 12.5% Drink 2014-2017
16

- Luis Pato, *Metodo Antigo Baga 2014 Portugal* Single fermentation with no sugar addition. Very pretty colour – orangey gold. Smells – and tastes – a little like beer? Bizarre. There's plenty of Victoria-plum fruit (the sort of orange-coloured plums you use for jam). Dry with a light tannic texture on the finish. Not sure about this. Probably an acquired taste. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2016
15.5
- Borgoluce, *Lampo NV Prosecco* Citrus and grapey. Smells more like Moscato! Drier and less grapey on the palate but still quite aromatic. Good allround fresh party fizz. Finishes mostly dry – fine and persistent mousse. (JH) 11% Drink 2015-2016
Imported into the UK by Flint Wines 15.5
- Luis Pato, *Metodo Antigo Maria Gomes 2013 Portugal* *Metodo Antigo refers to a single fermentation, with no sugar addition.*
Pale straw. Fragrant and lightly floral – spring blossom. On the palate, a slight bitterness that makes the wine refreshing rather than bitter. Delicate mousse. A bit too flowery on the palate for my taste in fizz but distinctive. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2015-2016
15.5
- Nyetimber, *Classic Cuvée Brut 2004 England* Quite big bubbles. Pale gold. Clean and slightly green on the nose. Light and bright but pretty simple. A 100% non malo wine. Green apple flavours. Light. Slightly hard finish. Not much follow through. 12% Drink 2008-2015
15.5
- Nyetimber, *Classic Cuvée Brut 2007 England* *Four years on lees. TA 11.6 g/l, RS 12 g/l.*
Tiny bead and persistent. Big difference in aroma from the 2004. Very slightly sweaty at first but at least it's not overwhelmingly green. Much more delicate mousse. Dry finish but some fruit and not too aggressively tart. Just a little tickle of fruit on the palate. 12% Drink 2011-2017
15.5
- Hennessey, *Brut 2010 England* Light, youthful, aggressively acid nose. Very frothy mousse. Super clean, well balanced palate but without much depth or complexity. Refreshing and extremely crisp but not that rewarding. 12% Drink 2015-2018
£29.99 Virgin Wines 15.5
- Nyetimber, *Blanc de Blancs Brut 2007 England* *Blanc de Blancs will be made only in suitable years now (compared with past practice). The 2004 and 2005 in the cellar 'won't come to market'. No malo.*
Still a little simple on the nose. Pretty marked acidity and still a little astringent. A bit too tight and chewy now. Launched late 2012 or early 2013, which was perhaps a little early. 12% Drink 2014-2018
15.5
- Réva, *Viola Metodo Classico Spumante Brut NV Italy* Chardonnay. Straw yellow. Ripe nose of yellow and white fruit, grapefruit and a hint of brioche. Fresh, lemony acidity underpinning ripe, rich fruit. Pretty dense on the finish. but with plenty of lemony freshness. (WS) 13.5% Drink 2015-2018
15.5
- Giulio Cocchi, *Totocorde 2009 Alta Langa* *Bottle fermented. 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay.*
Intense straw yellow. Fresh, prickling lemony nose with a hint of breadcrumb. Generous yellow fruit on the palate with almost completely dissolved acidity. Attractive bubbly, but lacks acidic nerve and with quite a rich mouth-feel for its stated alcohol. (WS) 12.5% Drink 2014-2017
15.5
- Sentio, *Brut NV Prosecco* Very pale. Pretty nose – bit of toasted almonds? Elderflower. Smart tap-dancing bubbles. Gentle white-fleshed pear and apple fruit, bit of green tea and some residual sugar sweetness. For Prosecco, it's not bad. (TC) 11% Drink 2015-2016
£12 Haslemere Cellar 15.5

- 2Castelli, Superiore Brut NV Prosecco di Conegliano Valdobbiadene *Made by the Zago Gasparini family. 100% Glera, grown on marl and limestone 200 m above sea level.* Perfumed, peaches-and-almond pastries. Fine bead, tight lacework, a hint of Prosecco soapiness. A bit of creamy cobnut and a little new-spring greenness. (TC)11% Drink 2015-2016
15.5
- Hambledon, Première Cuvée Brut NV England *58% Chardonnay, 24% Pinot Noir, 18% Pinot Meunier.* Creamy and biscuity with a saline note to contrast the very rich dairy-dominated nose. Much crisper than expected from the nose - but this is England, after all - and the fruit is fresh and linear. Finishes simply and easily. (RH)12% Drink 2015-2018
15.5
- Karanika, Cuvée Spéciale Xinomavro Brut NV Amydeeo *A little sweet and heavy but otherwise well made.* 12.3% Drink 2015-2016
£23 Maltby & Greek 15

ROSÉ SPARKLING WINE

- Bride Valley, Rosé 2014 England *Pretty colour like Victoria plums. Plenty of red fruit on the nose and a touch reductive (smoky) on the palate at the moment. Tight, excellent freshness and drive to a long finish. At the moment the slight sweetness appears at the very end - needs a little more time in bottle.* (JH) 12% Drink 2016-2020
£34.99 RRP imported by Liberty Wines 17
- Spiropoulos, Ode Panos Sparkling Rosé Agiorgitiko/Moschofilero 2014 Mantinia *Organic viticulture. Pretty pale pink. Tight, dry and fresh with a little sour cherry on the finish increasing the freshness. Full of flavour, not bone dry (RS 13 g/l) but will appeal more widely for that.* Long. (JH)12% Drink 2015-2016
£18.30 Maltby & Greek 16.5
- Nyetimber, Rosé Brut 2008 England *58% Chardonnay, 42% Pinot Noir. Aim is to tint with 15% still Pinot Noir. Launched in March 2012. TA 9.3 g/l, RS 12 g/l.* Quite winery and full on the nose. Strawberry colour - darker than most, as dark as the 2007. Very frothy and not that tart. Masses of fruit. Really quite broad. Off dry and lots to get your teeth into. A food wine? A lot friendlier than the 2007. Much more of a whole wine than many rosé champagnes. 12% Drink 2014-2018
16
- J Bouchon, Reserva Rosé 2015 Maule *10% Pais, 90% Cabernet Sauvignon.* Confectured, simple fruit with pleasant acidity and a simple fruit profile. Absolutely dry, to its credit. (RH) Drink 2015-2016
£9.50 RRP 15.5
- Paltrinieri, Radice Rosé Frizzante Secco 2014 Lambrusco di Sorbara *Secondary fermentation in bottle. From their own grapes, natural yeasts.* Pale wild salmon pink. Smells like nougat! Pistachio, wild rose petal, dusty fig. Very delicate sparkle, bone dry, and the pistachio nuts come through on the palate, edged with the dustiness of nutmeg. Sharp cranberry juice with cutting acidity. Not much length - ideally drink within the next six to eight months. (TC)11% Drink 2015-2016
15.5
- Juvé y Camps, Rosé Pinot Noir Brut NV Cava *Very pink for a Pinot, and there's plenty of sweet strawberry fruit too. At the top end of Brut on the palate, with a simple and refreshing fruit character. Perfectly clean, just not hugely interesting.* (RH)12% Drink 2015-2016
15

- Paltrinieri, Grosso Rosé Lambrusco Spumante Brut 2012 Modena Very pale pink. Light, slightly astringent scratchy bead. Bone dry and rather wan, pale flavours of cranberry. A little tired. I think this might have been better drunk a year or two earlier. (TC)12.5% Drink 2013-2015
15
- Paltrinieri, Leclisse Rosé Frizzante Secco 2014 Lambrusco di Sorbara Colour of coral. Paprika and bresaola smell, vaguely floral, red-apple skin. Not nearly as charming as the 2013 was. Quite sharp and earthy and sort of autumnal and mushroomy. Very hard work. It tastes tired. (TC)11% Drink 2015
14.5

RED SPARKLING WINE

- Contero 2014 Brachetto d'Aqui Gorgeous pale pinky red. Great wine to finish on (this was the last of about 90 wines) - smells of sweet-sour cherry and just a touch of mushroom. Red fruit - strawberry and cherry, playful, full of Victoria plum fruit. Light, sweet pleasure. (JH) 5.5% Drink 2015-2016
£17.99 RRP imported by Liberty Wines 16.5
- Graziano, Fontana dei Boschi Lambrusco Spumante Brut NV IGT Emilia 100% Lambrusco di Grasparossa, bottle fermented, from the 2011 vintage. Deep, dark ruby and foaming in the glass. Dark, lively fruit with a hint of clove. Fresh, dark, bitter-sweet palate with lovely acidity and a soft sparkle. Perfect in its simplicity. Long. (WS)12% Drink 2013-2018
16.5
- San Polo, Franco'13 Angol d'Amig NV Italy Bottle fermented and a proper Lambrusco in everything but name. Impenetrable, blackish purple. A deep blueberry and blackberry nose with a nutmeg undertow and more than a hint of leather. Intense, concentrated blackberry palate with proper, firm and drying tannins. That leather note again. Already two years old, but now at its peak. Wants and deserves food. Great example of what Lambrusco can be, in spite of the bretty note which puts it firmly in the 'vini naturali' corner (from where it should try to escape). (WS)12% Drink 2015-2017
16
- Paltrinieri, Solco Lambrusco Frizzante Semi-Secco 2014 IGT dell'Emilia Dark mulberry-stain purple. Decent persistence of bubbles. Farmyard and chocolate and Turkish Delight. Quite grapey in flavour. Not as sweet as I was expecting. Bit of graphite, very 'purple' tasting. This would probably go quite nicely with a bit of chilli chocolate, but there are better examples of Lambrusco out there. (TC)11% Drink 2015-2016
15.5