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Champagne Terroir

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Prices quoted in this catalogue refer to fully landed pre-arrival pricing per 750ml bottle unless otherwise stated. Pre-arrival pricing is only valid up to the closing date as specified on the order form. Any pre-arrival pricing or special offers will be included on the order form in this catalogue. Landed prices are generally 10% higher than pre-arrival specials. Any special price offers are only valid up to the closing date indicated in the offer. Orders are only accepted on the order form that comes with this offer. Quantities of all wines are limited. Due to demand from trade and restaurants – any unsold pre-arrival wines will move into the trade area of business to satisfy increased demands. The best way to guarantee availability of any wine is to order it well before the closing date and preferably as soon as you receive this catalogue. All prices are per/bottle and are offered subject to remaining unsold. Prices, description and availability are subject to change without notice. This is a pre-arrival offer and wines are due to arrive from France middle August.

Offer closes August 26th 2010. Wines arrive mid August.

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Champagne de Vigneron - Terroir



Terres et Vins 2010

Each year a creative group of 17 young passionate vigneron run a 'trade exhibition' of their 'vins clairs' and Champagnes. The setting is at Castel Jeanson in Ay. The idea is to taste and discuss the new season wines, and also an opportunity to launch new experimental cuvées. Many of our producers are part of the elite 17, including Fabrice Pouillon, Aurelien Laherte, Francis Boulard and Benoit Tarlant. Aurelien Laherte came up with the concept in 2009 – this was a great success and it left the big houses floundering! The big houses do not have the interest, creativity or initiative to come up with such a progressive concept. The concept gives us an accurate insight into the direction of Champagne. It is the young brigade that is pushing the envelope of 'terroir'. 'Biodynamics, large or small oak, grape varieties, solera, dosage' are just some of the parameters that are on the discussion table – and all are fundamental in allowing the 'terroir' to shine.

This offer is all about 'terroir' and its importance in the Champagne region. Aficionados often have a misconception that 'terroir' is all about 'uniqueness' and 'identity' – but it is much more than that. Also there is a commercially inspired idea that great wine is all about 'single vintage'. This is a myth propagated by the Bordelais to help sell wines en primeur.

When discussing 'terroir' with vigneron, they generally agree that 'vintage wines' are all about the idiosyncrasies of the 'year' and not truly indicative of the 'terroir' style of the grower. When tasting a range of Champagnes with a grower, it is easy to appreciate the changes in style as one tastes up the range. Certainly the 'vintage wine' can be quirky in its own way, but not necessarily representative of the 'grower'. But I always retaste the basic cuvee reserve to see how it compares. Without fail, the house cuvee reserve is a wonderful expression of the 'grower's terroir'.

So please do not discard the idea of drinking the 'non vintage' cuvée. It is a true expression of the terroir that the grower has at his disposal. Now more than ever, thanks to a run of good to very good high quality vintages, the humble 'non vintage blend' is becoming a true terroir icon at bargain basement price.

Terroir!

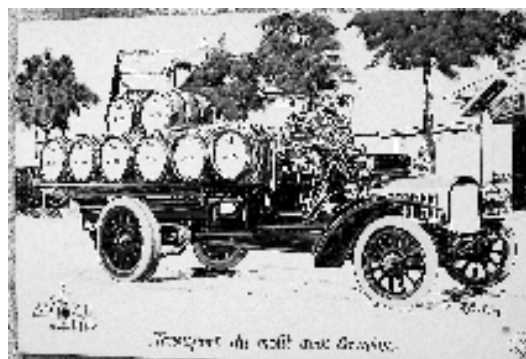
Cheers

Ross, Vic, Bev, Renée and Eve.

Le Brun Servenay

Avize – Cote des Blancs
9 hectares

Patrick Le Brun is a fastidious producer whose Champagnes are classic examples of Avize terroir. We first came across his wines over lunch with an English Champagne importer at a delightful little restaurant near Le Mesnil - Auberge Saint-Fergeux in Gionges – just up behind Le Mesnil in the hills. Prices for food and wines are very reasonable and we tried the Le Brun Selection and a Launois Cuvée Reserve. We were simply bowled over by the quality of the Le Brun Champagne – equal in quality to the Launois but different in style.



Our English friend made an appointment to visit Le Brun the next day and we visited one week later. This is a very serious grower – Patrick Le Brun used to be the president of the Syndicat General des Vignerons (SGV). This is a position which is elected by the growers. The SGV's main tasks are to defend the appellation, provide technical assistance, set standards policies and procedures and represent the growers at a national and regional level. Needless to say – to be elected to this position you have to be a damn good wine maker and command respect from your peers.

Patrick used to export very little Champagne – most going to direct customers and restaurants. But with three sons going thru the Lycee wine school – Patrick realises that he needs to expand his markets and create an ongoing legacy for his next generation. The entire range of Champagne is extra-ordinary.

Le Brun Servenay Brut Selection Avize Grand Cru

100% Chardonnay being a blend of 50% 2005, 20% 2003, 20% 2002 and 10% 2001. This particular cuvée is always a blend of 4 vintages – and good ones at that. Fermentation is classic in tank and the malo-lactic fermentation is blocked. Rich and tight, very complex with oodles of Avize spice – coupled with subtle overtones of white fruits. There is purity and weight and the lack of malo-lactic fermentation adds a level of finesse and freshness which makes this a great aperitif or food style. This is primarily from Avize with a little Cramant (vineyard right on the Avize border) and a little Oger. The 'Wine Advocate Antonio Galloni' December 2008 issue rates this at 90/100. ***'a serious, weighty wine endowed with notable richness and depth. This powerful Champagne offers layers of mineral-infused Chardonnay fruit with superb length on the palate and remarkable harmony. The NV Brut Grand Cru Sélection sparkles on the palate with beautifully articulated lime peel, chalk, flowers and mint in a polished, refined style. This linear, focused Champagne offers exceptional length and a crisp, refreshing finish that makes it impossible to resist a second taste.'***



\$45.50 Code: 5932

This is such a great Champagne – Rockpool in Sydney are pouring this by the glass. This also rates a 'Coup de Coeur' in Guide Hachette 2009 – which is no easy feat.



Benoit Marguet in the vineyard.



Tasting the 2008 vin clairs.

Bernard Launois makes a sophisticated and elegant range of classic Le Mesnil-sur-Oger Chardonnay. Established in 1872 and now 36 ha in size with 22 ha of vineyards in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, Avize, Oger and Cramant, and 14 ha of vines in Sezanne. 22ha is bottled by the family with the remainder being sold off. The vinification style is classic in flat bottomed stainless steel tanks, leaving the wines to enrich on their lees for much longer than usual. Bernard is one of the best producers in Le Mesnil – most Champagne journalists say he is the best after Salon!

Daughters Severine and Caroline along with husbands Benoit and Franck are pushing the family business to new levels of greatness. Severine is married to Benoit Marguet from Champagne Marguet in Ambonnay. So not only does Benoit manage his own Champagne label, he is also responsible for vine propagation at Launois, currently working on a project to use best cuttings material from their own very old vineyard plots to replace dead vines. He has worked as far away as Washington State and is interested in biodynamics and geo-biology. Bernard has established a delightful wine museum in the cellars of his property with many artifacts from years gone by. Always a joy to visit when touring around the region – naturally the museum tour is followed by a tasting.

Demand for Launois Champagne is very high. Having been discovered many years ago by the Swedish Champagne guru Richard Juhlin means that the Swedes get a huge allocation. Launois really made its mark at a huge '2000 Millenium Tasting' of all the great cuvées going as far back as 1928. The Launois 1990 Special Club was rated as the 'best 1990' beating the likes of Selosse, Salon, Crystal etc. We are pushing hard to increase our allocations but it is not easy – every last bottle is reserved – every last bottle is pre-sold. The style at Launois is at the richer end of the spectrum – with longer lees contact in tank adding weight and complexity. Later in the year we will be receiving a tiny allocation of 2002 Special Club! A superb wine and clearly stamps Launois as a contender to Salon in terms of style and quality.

Launois NV Cuvée Reserve Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs.

For the time being the popular Cuvée Quartz has sold out and we will get our next allocation early in 2011. So we focus on the equally as brilliant cuvée Reserve. Blended from 2005 and 2004 with some older reserve wines, all Grand Cru Chardonnay predominantly from Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, with Cramant, Oger and a little Avize. Racy and elegant with typical Le Mesnil wet stone, yet still showing richness, weight and intensity thru the extended lees contact. Mousse is gently foaming and very persistent. An absolute classic Le Mesnil! Perfect as an aperitif and a sensation at the tastings held across Australia. A real favourite and demand always exceeds supply. We can never get enough of this cuvée.



Code:3533 \$53.00 pre-arrival

Veuve Fourny

Vertus 1er Cru – Cote des Blancs
9 hectares

Madame Fourny and her two sons, Emmanuel and Charles-Henry, have a small holding of 9 hectares of Premier Cru vineyards in the Côte des Blanc – with optimal exposures of South and South-East and an average vine age of 35 years. The varietal mix is 85% Chardonnay, 15% Pinot Noir and 5% Pinot Meunier. Principal markets are France, Belgium and Japan. Neither chemicals nor fertilizers are used in the vineyards and farming is a synthesis of biodynamic and organic. All the champagnes are aged for a minimum of 3 years prior to disgorgement and a further 6 months afterwards. They produce benchmark Blanc de Blancs which are medium-bodied, rich and creamy and have great elegance and style. Emmanuel worked in Burgundy for a number of years and is applying his knowledge from extended lees contact and oak maturation to gain better flavor. Also he is sympathetically working with blocking the malolactic fermentation in certain percentages of the cuvées to gain some aromatic complexities. Also dosages at Veuve Fourny are very low – they believe in allowing the terroir to speak.

Veuve Fourny Blanc de Blancs Brut 1er Cru Vertus

Classic spicy Chardonnay nose, savory and elegant with minerals and chalk. Blend of 60% 2005 and older reserve wines. Average vine age 35 years – only the best cuvées are used and now Emmanuel is maturing 20% of this cuvée in small oak barrels. The major part of the blend comes from the 'lieu-dit' of Monts Ferrés which is on the Mesnil side of the village, and this certainly adds style with excellent weight. Even though Vertus is next door to Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, Vertus has a little more acid and spice. Mousse is very subtle and long. A classic style with typical Vertus acid and just a hint of pear and floral so typical of the terroir and a piercing minerality. Dosage is very low which is indicative of the concentrated flavor of low yielding vines, only 5g/litre. Mytik Diam corks are used specifically for the Australian market across all the Fourny wines. Burghound rates this at 93/100.



\$47.50 Code 3536
Pre-arrival

Here is what Michael Edwards says in his book – *The Finest Wines of Champagne*.

“Emmanuel Fourny certainly talks more sense about the right way to make fine Champagne than anyone I know. It shows progressively as you taste up the range.”

Veuve Fourny Cuvée ‘R’ de Veuve Fourny et Fils



Code: 3620
\$64.00 Pre-arrival

In the 1950's, Roger Fourny and his father Albert designed a special cuvée from the 3 main grape varieties vinified in small oak barrels. Decades later, Roger's sons, Emmanuel and Charles-Henry, both wine buffs, discover the last few remaining bottles and decide to re-create this cuvée in memory of their father who passed away at an early age. Old vines from chalky soils, 90% Chardonnay with the remainder split between Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Blend of the superb 2004 vintage with 40% reserve wines from 2002. Organic farming, natural yeasts, battonage (stirring of the lees in the barrel) and no filtration with a low dosage of 3g/litre. The nose has hints of citrus, minerals, vanilla all flowing seamlessly into an intense and unctuous palate showing spices, dried fruits and almonds. Most of the fruit comes from old vines in a lieu-dit called Les Barillées – mid-slope in Vertus.

2008 BURGUNDY OFFER

We will be offering our usual selection of growers resulting from the 2008 vintage. The bottling times are, as usual, mixed so we will wait until after the 2010 vintage to make our collections and the actual offer. I have tasted the complete range of 2008 wines from all growers and report the wines to be of excellent quality and a typical Burgundian Pinot Noir vintage. The prevailing conditions in the lead up to the harvest were quite variable with both cool and warm weather making it more difficult in the vineyard. This culminated in a degree of mould and rot in some bunches. For those growers that waited until the official starting date of the vintage they were rewarded with warmer weather and drying winds to ensure a more even ripening of the bunches. There was a great demand for the table le tirage (sorting table) and if any grower did not possess one they were impossible to purchase given the demand. This was to prove vital and careful selection of non affected grapes and bunches was vital to choose those grapes that were not inflicted with rot.

Growers, in general, were anxious about the final outcome of the vintage but after alcoholic and malo-lactic fermentations the wines started to take shape. After 9 months in the cellar many growers became absolutely delighted with the outcome of the wines. The wines did not show any affect from the mould/rot and they progressively developed more fruit intensity and usual 'terroir' characteristics. Given more time in barrel this intensity increased to result in impressive wines of stature and framework. This is a very individual year and if I was to compare 2008 with any vintage of the past I would select 1990 or 1998.

I recommend the vintage to you and look forward to presenting our offer later in the year.

2009 BURGUNDY

The growing conditions of 2009 provided Pinot Noirs of exquisite balance of fruit, tannins, acid and stunning length and 'terroir'. It seems that all the elements combined to present the growers with grapes of plump ripeness; no sign of mould or rot with bunches of perfect quality that did not require any rejection prior to fermentation. The malic acid levels were much higher than usual and most vigneronns had to exercise stricter temperature to arrest the early onset of malo-lactic fermentation. It is always preferred to embark upon a slow and steady 'malo' as fruit quality can be compromised with immediate and rapid outcomes. Now that the wines are well settled the style and character becomes more obvious.

During my tastings in March/April of this year the wines began to make their own statement. Hence the frenzy we are now experiencing. I prefer to let the wines settle further before shipping and have asked the domaine to opt for their normal release programme rather than rush out the wines or, heaven forbid, offer an 'en primeur' system which invariably pushes prices up. I am happy to report that most of them agree so we will continue as normal and offer the 2009 wines next year. If you are interested in any particular wines in advance, we are accepting expressions of interest.

2007 BURGUNDY TASTING.

2007 is a classic vintage in Burgundy, and many wines are drinking superbly now. Come and taste thru a large and comprehensive range of wines and decide for yourself. There will be some special prices available on the night.

2007 Burgundy Extravangza

Champagne Darling? 203 Glenferrie Road. Malvern. 3144

Tuesday September 14th. 6:30-8:30pm Cost: \$60

Gaston Chiquet

Dizy – Marne Valley
22 hectares



The original Nicolas Chiquet planted his first vines in 1746. Since then eight generations have carried on the family tradition. Gaston Chiquet launched his own brand in 1935. They now own 22 hectares covering Dizy, Ay, Mareuil-sur-Ay and Hautvillers. The proportions cultivated are Chardonnay 40%, Pinot Meunier 40% and Pinot Noir 20%. Dizy has a 1er Cru classification with a rating of 95% and has much in common with its neighbouring village Ay. The Chiquets are cousins of the Jacquesson Chiquets just around the corner. The wines show good weight and intensity, and they are proud to use their high quality Pinot Meunier. Having 1er Cru vineyards helps, since it basically means you have access to Pinot Meunier which cannot be grown in Grand Cru designated vineyards! Pinot Meunier is a much maligned variety. Nicolas makes a wonderful 100% Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru from Ay which is a masterpiece – but sadly this is only available in small quantities. He also makes a vintage reserve Ay Blanc de Blancs, which is only available in magnums!! Now that's what I call a serious and passionate vigneron! Nicolas is also a member of the 'Club Tresors' and produces a 'Special Club' cuvée which is currently the 2000 Vintage. The 'Club Tresors' draws inspiration on three guiding principles – authenticity, rigor and originality.

The style here is for precise Champagnes that are accurate of their terroir and grape variety. The wine making does not mask or hide what nature provides. The entire range is outstanding – even the humble Brut Tradition is an excellent wine – we have a number of restaurants pouring this by the glass.

Michael Edwards in the 'Finest Wines of Champagne' says

'These Champagnes preeminently give the drinker a real sense of place, of the special plots of earth from which they come ... the antithesis of a big house's blend of many parts.'

Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition NV.

A blend of 80% 2006 and older reserve wines. 35% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir and 45% Pinot Meunier with a dosage of 8gm/litre. This is a delightfully round and balanced cuvée with a persistent and elegant mousse. Colour is a straw gold, aromas of brioche and apple leading to a complex and unctuous palate, no doubt enriched by the quality Pinot Meunier component. Always an approachable rounder style and perfect as an aperitif or with any seafood or white meat. A bargain. Nicolas has advised us that demand for his Champagnes are booming and that he will need to start rationing allocations. Our advice is to stock up while prices are at an all time low!



\$47.00/bt Code: 3417 pre-arrival

'Champagne Terroir' August 2010 OFFER - ORDER FORM

Ross Duke Wine Company Pty Ltd, Suite 309, 63 Stead St, South Melbourne. 3205
 TEL: (03) 9696 7920 FAX: (03) 9696 8703 Email: rdwc@frenchwinecentre.com

OFFER CLOSES: 26th August, 2010

CODE	QTY. (3 bottle multiples)	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	VALUE
3529		Benard-Pitois Brut Reserve 1er Cru	\$45.00	
3530		Eric Rodez Grand Cru 'Cuvée des Crayères'	\$58.00	
3417		Gaston Chiquet Brut Tradition	\$47.00	
4137		Henriet-Bazin Rose Grand Cru	\$54.00	
3622		Jean Vesselle Brut Rose Saignee	\$49.00	
3533		Launois NV Cuvee Reserve Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs	\$53.00	
5932		Le Brun Servenay Brut Selection Avize Grand Cru	\$45.50	
3535		Tarlant Brut Nature Zero	\$55.00	
3536		Veuve Fourny Blanc de Blancs 1er Cru	\$47.50	
3620		Veuve Fourny Cuvee 'R'	\$64.00	
		CHAMPAGNE PACKS		
6044		Terroir Selection Pack	\$300.00	
		LESS 5% Case discount *		
		SUB - TOTAL		\$:
		FREIGHT		\$:
		GRAND TOTAL		\$:

* 5% Case discount applies to 12 bottles of the 'same' wine.

QUANTITIES OF SOME WINES ARE LIMITED, ORDER EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT.

DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS ARE IMPORTANT
PLEASE ENTER DELIVERY ADDRESS ONLY BELOW

A business address that is open between 9a.m. and 5p.m. where someone is able to receive the wine is preferable.

However if we are delivering to a private address Australia Post now has provision on its label for a brief instruction of where you are happy for wine to be left if no one at home (i.e. on front porch under cover/in garage on left side of house/by front door out of weather/with concierge etc.) If there is nowhere safe, and nobody is home they will leave a card and take delivery to nearest Australia Post outlet.

NAME: _____

DELIVERY ADDRESS: _____

P.CODE: _____

SPECIAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS: _____

TEL: (DAYTIME ONLY): _____ CONTACT NAME: _____

E.mail (if not already supplied): _____

PAYMENT METHOD: DIRECT CREDIT/CHEQUE/AMEX/VISA/MASTERCARD
(Preferred credit cards Visa/Mastercard)

CARD No: _____ EXPIRES: ____ / ____

NAME ON CARD _____

SIGNATURE: _____

TERMS, CONDITIONS & PRICES OF OFFER

Orders must be in cases of 12 or 6 bottles (750ml.) and in multiples of 3 unless otherwise specified.

This enables safer packing, with less chance of breakages during delivery.

Please check your order carefully upon receipt and advise of any discrepancies within 10 working days. If an error is made it is virtually impossible to rectify if notified months later.

Prices are per pack including all duties, taxes, W.E.T. and G.S.T. These prices are only valid for orders placed on or before the closing date. Prices and availability are subject to change without notice. Normal retail prices apply after closing date and are approx. 10% more.

Freight Rates
(These rates apply unless otherwise quoted)

Destination	PER CASE	Destination	Per Case
Melbourne	\$10.00	Country Queensland	\$17.00
Country Victoria	\$12.00	Cairns/Noosa	\$22.00
Sydney & Adelaide	\$12.00	Perth	\$25.00
Country N.S.W. A.C.T. & S.A	\$14.00	Country W.A.	\$35.00
Brisbane	\$14.00	Tasmania	\$20.00

Benard-Pitois

Mareuil-sur-Ay
Marne Valley - 10 hectares



Yes another Mareuil-sur-Ay producer, and why not, this little village is a sweet spot for excellent value authentic Champagnes from nearly Grand Cru vineyards – 99%. Laurent Benard has 10 ha of vineyards (3ha of which he sells to Bollinger and Pol Roger) spreading across prestigious Cote des Blancs Grand Crus and also Marne Valley 1er Crus, consisting of Chardonnay 16%, Pinot Meunier 17% and Pinot Noir 67%. Vineyards in Mareuil-sur-Ay, Mutigny, Avenay Val d'Or, Oger, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger and Bergeres les Vertus, with Reconstituted Grape Must (RCGM) being used for the 'liqueur de dosage' in favour of sugar. . Use of sympathetic oak fermentation and maturation for the Chardonnay components of the various cuvees. A prestigious array of vineyards allows Laurent to produce an impressive range of terroir focused wines with only a hint of subtle oak allowed to add complexity and elegance. He vinifies his different vineyard parcels in small tanks which gives him better control of selecting his final blends. After many experiments he only uses reconstituted grape must for dosage. And he is easy to locate – being just outside of the village on the bypass road to Bouzy. They are a very friendly family – always eager to look after passing guests.

Benard-Pitois NV Brut Reserve 1er Cru

Blend of 20% CH and 80% Pinot Noir, Mesnil-sur-Oger, Oger, Mareuil-sur-Ay and Mutigny from 2005 and 2004. The Chardonnay has been vinified in oak barriques. Has some very elegant smoke, spice and richness with nice acid and pin point mousse. A very complex style with hints of apricot, dried fruits, brioche. Laurent Benard allows the subtle micro-oxygenation of the oak to impart a hint of brioche and smoke. Lovely structure with great red fruit intensity and weight. A bargain and a great favourite last year. This reminds me of Bollinger in style – which is no bad thing.

Code:3529 \$45.00 pre-arrival



Champagne 'Terroir'selection. \$300 special Code: 6044

Here we have a superb six bottle selection of Champagnes from the Cote des Blancs, Montagne de Reims and Marne Valley. Two wines from each of the regions will provide you with a great opportunity to discover what 'terroir' is all about.

**Tarlant Brut Nature Zero.
Benard-Pitois Cuvee Reserve.
Launois Reserve Blanc de Blancs.
Veuve-Fourny 1er Cru Blanc de Blancs.
Eric Rodez Crayeres.
Jean Vesselle Saignée Rose.**



Vignerons since 1687, who now, under the guidance of Benoit Tarlant, are producing an impressive array of terroir driven wines. Careful use of barrel fermentation allows Benoit to create a range of elegant but complex wines from the three classic varieties, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Oeuilly is 10km west of Epernay on the main N3 road to Dormans – in the Marne Valley – quite high up, looking over the Marne river. 13 Hectares are divided into diverse soil types: Chalk, Limestone, Sand, Gravel and Sparnacien which is a blend of clay and chalk. Average age of the vines is 29 years with the ratio being Pinot Noir 50%, Chardonnay 30% and Pinot Meunier 20%. This is Marne Valley terroir, so the Pinots are the dominant varieties.

Benoit is very fastidious about the quality of his grapes and the subsequent juice. Traditionally in Champagne you are allowed to press 2,550 litres of juice from 4,000 kg of grapes. This is split into various quality components which may or may not be used by the grower and maybe sold off. Benoit takes this one step further. He carefully monitors the juice from the 1st pressing known as the ‘cuvée’ and splits this into two components, ‘cuvée A’ and ‘cuvée B’. When he is no longer happy with the quality – he stops pressing then and there.

Tarlant Brut Nature ‘Zero’

Blend of 1/3 each of CH, PN and PM, from 2004 and reserve wines with no added dosage. An intense aromatic style, with hints of grapefruit, minerals, smoke and real purity. There is honey and brioche on a very very long palate. Very approachable and just so perfectly balanced. The mousse is ultra-fine and persistent. Has amazing richness with weight and complexity and in a masked line up it is difficult to detect that this is a Brut Zero. Critics agree that this is the ‘benchmark’ Brut Zero. Always a specialty of Benoit and one of his favorites.. Regularly acclaimed as being a perfect food match and features in many Michelin starred restaurants. The Brut Nature comprises 75% of the total Tarlant production – it is very popular and maybe the best Zero on the market. This used to be called the ‘Brut Zero’ but it appears that a Spanish Cava producer has copyrighted the term ‘Brut Zero’. So rather than fight the Spaniards in the courts, Benoit has changed the name of this cuvée to ‘Brut Nature’. C’est la vie!



\$55.00 Code: 3535
Pre-arrival

Vinification is partly in stainless steel and small oak barriques from Burgundy. Malolactic fermentation is blocked to add some freshness and acidity. The back label is always a masterpiece of technique description as Benoit goes to great lengths to explain the vineyard, when and how the grapes were picked, disgorgement dates and dosage. There is no margin for error. Benoit exposes all! Ever since Benoit was a child working in the family vineyard, he always recognized that the various plots of vineyards produced ‘different tasting grapes’. Now he has

utilised his knowledge and experience by creating 'micro-cuvées' from these unique vineyard parcels. Benoit has created two super mono variety Cuvées, "La Vigne d'Antan Non Greffée" Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut made from ungrafted original Chardonnay rootstock vines planted in 1961, and 'La Vigne d'Or Blanc de Meuniers" from very old Pinot Meunier vines. This Pinot Meunier cuvée reminded me very much of Krug! These wines undergo small barrique fermentation with no malolactic fermentation, no fining and no filtration.

For us sales of Brut Zero has been very popular with many restaurants featuring it on their winelist or pouring it by the glass.

Henriet-Bazin

Villers-Marmery
Montagne de Reims - 10 hectares



Marie-Noelle and father Daniel cultivate 10ha of vines in Villers-Marmery 1er Cru (Chardonnay) and Verzenay, Verzy Grand Cru (Pinot Noir). The original Henriet family specialised in Champagne production whereas the Bazins were grape growers – and now four generations later, father and daughter are producing some sensational Champagne from Grand Cru and 1er Cru vineyards in some of the best locations in the Montagne de Reims. 80,000 bottles are produced annually with 40% going to the Swiss, Italy, England and U.S.

The commune of Villers-Marmery is very famous for its unique clone of Chardonnay – but for this offer our focus is more on the excellent quality of Pinot Noir from Verzenay and Verzy Grand Cru. Verzy and Verzenay are directly next to each other and enjoy an east to north-easterly aspect at a height of 140-220 metres. These are prestigious vineyards indeed with Krug, Bollinger, Taittinger, Laurent-Perrier, Veuve Clicquot, Moët et Chandon and Roederer owning vineyards and buying as many grapes as they can. Many of the big houses have huge pressoirs in these villages – such is the importance of maintaining the quality at the highest possible level. Transporting grapes huge distances can damage the outer grape skin layer and hence affect the quality of the pressed juice. Vinification is classic in tank, no oak is utilised and malo-lactic fermentations are blocked for all cuvées.

The Pinot Noirs are vinous with pepper, iron, mineral and gunpowder aromas – and these characteristics are essential to the great Krug, Bollinger and Roederer prestige cuvées. In Verzy and Verzenay more than 80% of the vineyards are planted to Pinot Noir with the remainder being Chardonnay.

Henriet-Bazin Brut Grand Cru Rosé NV.

50% Pinot Noir and 50% Chardonnay from a blend of 2005 and 2004 reserve wines. This rosé is made by the addition of red wine. In this case by the addition of 20% old vines Pinot Noir from Verzenay. There is an abundance of strawberries and other red fruits – counterbalanced with great acid and oodles of smoky Pinot Noir aromas. Dosage of 8g/litre. Very popular in previous offer and we have been able to secure some more stock. Be quick. **\$54.00 pre-arrival Code: 4137**





Bouzy is famous for its Pinot Noir. Compared to Ambonnay, it is more mineral and has less macerated red fruit character. There is a certain nervous edge to the wines. Large in overall structure, maybe even robust with smoky bacon overtones but there is still an under-lying elegance, acid and mineral kick that concentrates all the flavours.

The Vesselle family have been vigneron in Bouzy for 300 years and farm 11 ha of vines in two parcels. All Grand Cru with 90% Pinot Noir and 10% Chardonnay. Delphine Vesselle carries on the family tradition after her father passed away at an early age in 1996. After 6 years at “lycée viticole de la Champagne” she did work experience in South Africa, Australia and Japan. The wines show their Pinot Noir heritage but there

is a subtlety and elegance which makes the entire range of Champagnes very enchanting.

The cuverie has been redesigned and extended allowing room to store wines in bottle for longer and also to allow for more oak. Delphine’s husband David is the technocrat – bringing new ideas and innovation into an already top performing property. David is the black sheep of the family being from a grape growing family in Chouilly – he has adapted very quickly and is open to new ideas and tastes widely across all wine styles from all countries. He is now the driving force behind this leading producer in Bouzy.

One of the highlights of the entire Jean Vesselle collection is the unique 100% Pinot Noir Champagne “Le Petit Clos” made from the .0822 acres which constitutes the little walled area next to the winery in Bouzy. This tiny micro-climate allows the grapes to be picked at optimal maturity, then vinified and stored in small oak barriques from Meursault using natural yeast, no fining, no filtration, battonage and no malolactic fermentation. They only make one or two barrels of this. The quality of this remarkable cuvée is testament to the wine making passion of Delphine and David.



Jean Vesselle NV Brut Rosé Bouzy.

This is a true rosé produced by maceration (saignée) method. After a 36-48 hour maceration on the grape skins – the must is pressed and fermented in tank. Vines are 30 years of age, 100% Pinot Noir with a dosage of 9g/litre. A classic style with typical Bouzy aromas of smoke and apple, along with small red berries, with a very fine persistent mousse. The palate has sour cherries and strawberries in abundance, all sitting in perfect balance. A complex rosé and a bargain. This style of rosé beckons for grilled tuna, quail, duck, chicken or veal. Blend of 2005 and reserve wines. **Price \$49.00 Code 3622 Pre-arrival.**

Here is what Max Allen said in ‘The Australian – May 12th 2010’.

‘Delphine Vesselle’s pinot noir rose is outrageously good value. As well as its refreshing “champagne” qualities – tart raspberries and fine bubbles – there’s a savoury, satisfying vinosity you usually find in much more expensive red Burgundy.’

Eric Rodez

Ambonnay
Montagne de Reims – 6 hectares



'Le Respect du Terroir'

Eric Rodez is the eighth generation of family growing grapes in the prestigious pinot noir producing Grand Cru village of Ambonnay. He is a true artisan of his trade who is focused on the art of terroir, old vines, oak integration and control of malo-lactic fermentation. Subtle use of small Burgundian oak and control of malolactic fermentation allows Eric to create a brilliant range of terroir driven Champagnes. His 6 ha property is divided into 35 plots of only Grand Cru vines split roughly 55/45 Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Farming is ecologically sympathetic and organic friendly farming is always preferred. Eric is now undergoing full conversion to biodynamic viticulture for all of his vineyards. He worked in Burgundy (Domaine Rapet Pere et Fils), Beaujolais and the Rhone for three years during his youth, and also worked for a year at Krug.

Burgundy taught him much about oak fermentation and maturation and his work with Henri Krug re-enforced his ideas even further. Now 80% of Eric's wines are matured in some sort of oak for various periods. Dosages are light – between 5-8gm/litre - and he uses RCGM not sugar. He does not use any fertilizers, herbicides or insecticides. And yes, like all villages in France, some one as to be the mayor of Ambonnay! His duties as mayor means that he is a very busy vigneron and not easy to pin down for a tasting appointment. Also FYI the 'z' in Rodez IS pronounced, it is NOT silent.



Eric Rodez Grand Cru 'Cuvée des Crayères'

A blend of 50/50 Pinot Noir and Chardonnay all from Grand Cru Ambonnay. Blend of 2005 and reserve wines going back seven years. 92% aged in tank and the remainder in oak barrels. All in all there are 12 different wines in this complex blend. A perfectly balanced wine, there are hints of floral and citrus on a long finish. Beautiful

expression of Ambonnay with just a subtle hint of richness imposed by the oak. There is the added finesse of the Chardonnay and the wonderful brioche added by the gentle oak. Dosage 6gm/litre RCGM(reconstituted grape must). Lovely freshness and vivacity in this extra-ordinary basic cuvée Champagne. The mousse is fine, long lasting and penetrating. We have seen other Ambonnay growers Champagnes being offered on the Australian market at double and triple the price – and we think that Eric Rodez are better wines across the board! This was very popular in our final offer last year and we have managed to obtain another small allocation. A number of restaurants and wine merchants have discovered this bargain. Be quick! **Code:3530 \$58.00 Pre-arrival**

Peter Liem - Champagneguide

Eric Rodez's champagnes feel crafted in the best sense of the word: they display a vinous intensity that obviously comes from quality work in the vineyards, yet they also demonstrate a sophisticated complexity and refinement that indicates a sure hand in the cellar.