

# Champagne notebooks

## special wine for celebration

From the baptism of Clovis by Saint Rémi in Reims to the inauguration of international exhibitions and victory in the World Cup, Champagne has long been the wine of first choice to celebrate the great events in the history of mankind.

## quality that is much sought-after

Since they were first produced, these wines have been enjoyed by royalty and the great men and women of the world, people who have appreciated the character of the wines and their unique qualities. Stars among wines, they have inspired speeches and songs, music and art.

## gift of exhilaration

For many centuries their effervescence, their golden colour, and their elegance have led them to be associated with the most sparkling of festivities and the best moments in life. They invite, they inspire, they share... and they promise much more besides.

[www.champagne.fr](http://www.champagne.fr)

L'ABUS D'ALCOOL EST DANGEREUX POUR LA SANTÉ,  
CONSOMMEZ AVEC MODÉRATION

*millennium*



*festive*

*illustrious*

*celebratory*



# Champagne notebooks

number 5



# Champagne - a few pointers

*Did you know* that the first recorded event to be celebrated with wines from Champagne was the baptism of a French king - , years ago?

*Did you know* that geography and history have combined to produce these special wines which have long been appreciated by kings and princes?

*Can you imagine* celebrating a victory, a birthday, a marriage or a new venture without Champagne?

*For centuries* Champagnes have been associated with a glamorous way of life. They give a touch of grandeur and panache to our own celebrations.

Who would consider seeing in the new *Millennium* without Champagne?

This notebook on the theme of *celebration* tells of the art of making Champagne wines and how these wines have always been involved with the joys of life over the centuries.

# a special wine



Philip the Fair  
of France

# for celebration

## An unusual wine

Champagne is unique. The characteristics of the Champagne terroir, unique to the region, give the wine its special style. The region covers just 34,165ha (less than 85,000 acres). The climate is rather tough on the vines and erratic sunshine allows only a limited harvest which always seems somewhat miraculous. Yet it is these conditions which give the wine its wonderful crispness. There are strict regulations governing the production of Champagne wines. Just three grape varieties may be grown, while the way the vines are grown, the method of winemaking, the length of time the wines are aged and the precise demarcation of the vineyards are strictly controlled. Champagnes all have appellation contrôlée status which gives the guarantee that they are true Champagnes produced in the Champagne region.



The baptism  
of Clovis

## Holy wine, from the beginning.

In early times, it was **the monks** who tended the vines to produce the sacred wine drunk during mass.

A fortuitous combination of events ensured Champagne's place in

history. **Saint Rémi**, bishop of Reims, lived in a villa surrounded by vineyards, near where the town of Epernay now stands. He converted Clovis, King of the Franks, to Christianity. At the king's baptism at Christmas in , he was anointed with Champagne wine, in the Champagne region. Several centuries on, in , **Jeanne**, heiress of Champagne



Saint Rémi, Bishop of Reims

and Navarre, married the heir to the French throne, later Philip the Fair. Thus the lords of the Champagne region, became closely allied to the crown of France.

th century onwards, Champagne became increasingly well known and appreciated around the world. The choice of the rich and important,

## Steeped in history

Between and **the kings of France** were crowned in Reims, in the heart of the Champagne region. At the accompanying festivities, Champagne flowed freely. The wines were appreciated for their flavour and superior taste, and were offered in homage to any visiting monarchs to the area. Both **Francis** and **Mary Stuart** (later Mary Queen of Scots) received

casks of Champagne on their travels through Reims, while **Louis** was offered several hundred pints for his coronation. From the

it was accepted as the wine for celebrations.



Louis XIV,  
painted by  
Rigaud



Marie Stuart  
Queen of France



Even the revolutionaries on **Bastille Day**, July , considered Champagne

Bastille Day 1789



the appropriate wine to celebrate with on the Champ de Mars. Then a few years later, the statesmen and princes attending the **Congress of Vienna** at the end of the Napoleonic wars, spoke of the omnipresence of Champagne. The attendees all had a marvellous time: *"their spirits sparkled like the wines of Champagne"* and it helped form a bond between the participants. It has featured at the signing of **many important treaties**, including Maastricht. **Queen Pomare of Tahiti** ordered several cases of Champagne to mark the



The Mercier balloon

dedication of a pagan temple on her island. Throughout the centuries Champagne wines have always featured prominently on the wine lists at **royal marriages**. At the **Paris Exhibition of 1900**, it made a spectacular appearance -by

balloon. Today, more than ever, people always call for Champagne when celebrating significant events.

A caricature of the Congress of Vienna, 1815



The French court in 1840

## Emotional times

Since Clovis' times, Champagne has been linked with **christenings** - the inevitable wine chosen to "wet the baby's head".



The Prince and Princess of Wales launch the Airbus A320

Champagne is the wine of choice for launching ships - it has blessed the

cracked open a bottle in triumph at climbing the peak. In , Pierre Mazaud also drank Champagne on the summit of a mountain, this time it was **Everest**. And following in the tradition of the early aviators, Jean-Louis Chrétien called for a glass of Champagne when he landed after his trip to the Soviet space station.

### And for good-byes

**Philip of Orléans** was waiting in the Conciergerie to appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal in , and knowing what his fate would be, calmly drank the "wine of kings" - he could think of no better way to spend his last moments on earth. After **Napoléon** had defeated the army of the Tsar at Smolensk, the local gentry consoled themselves with Champagne - "delicious even though French".



Launching a ship

hulls of countless vessels, and it doesn't matter if the ship was the Great-Britain launched in , the Titanic in , the QE in or someone's sailing dinghy, called "*My Dream*", launched just last week, it has to be Champagne. It was there, of course, for the maiden flight of **Concorde** and the meeting of the French and English sections of the **Channel Tunnel**. It was definitely



French and English workmen celebrate the link-up of the Channel Tunnel

served ice-cold on **Annapurna** when Maurice Herzog



Napoléon meeting M. Moët.

President Sadi Carnot visiting the cellars of Champagne



### Great occasions

Whatever the occasion, we have adopted the habit of celebrating with Champagne. Take sports, for example.



The debutantes' ball

### Winning

teams toast their success in Champagne and who can forget the image of Grand Prix drivers on the winners'rostrum after the race celebrating their prowess with bottles of Champagne.



Tazio Nuvolari winner of the Vanderbilt Cup on the Theodore Roosevelt track, 1936



*"Golden with copper tones, subtle and delicate, with a most agreeable taste on the palate - made for kings, princes and great lords".*

# quality that is much sought after

## A wine of genius

Champagne has been developed through the talents of many people over the years. The art of blending the grapes, and then the wines, from different villages, even from different vintages, was first discovered by monks, and was a well-established practice by the end of the 17th century. This art, based on tasting, is similar to the techniques used by painters to mix their colours to give the effects they are looking for. Blending calls on experience and memory and the cellarmasters' tastebuds. Each cellarmaster creates a unique blend - the specific style of each producer. Every Champagne is a unique creation, which explains the almost universal use of a House name on the label, declaring the style. As a result, the most talented Champagne makers have become internationally famous.

Voltaire and Frederick II of Prussia



## The nectar of monarchs

**Kings, princes and nobles** were the first lovers of Champagne. They spread the fame of the quality of these wines and were their finest ambassadors. There is no lack of stories: when **Charles** of France met the **King of Bohemia** in the 14th century, the diplomatic qualities of the wines of Champagne were said to have contributed to the success of the discussions. Again, **Frederick** of Prussia was so fond of Champagne that he asked members of his Academy to assess "scientifically" how Champagne differed from other wines.

Historians tell us that the French Court had a taste for Champagne: **Marie-Antoinette** and **Madame de Pompadour** were both lovers of these wines and, of course, it was



Charles VI



Florens-Louis Heidsieck presents a bottle of Champagne to Marie-Antoinette

inconceivable that the celebrated suppers of the Duke of Orléans, **Regent** for the infant

Louis, could pass off without masses of Champagne. When **Louis** commissioned Jean-François de Troy to paint "a feast of oysters" for the Royal dining room, Champagne took pride of place.

**Tsar Alexander of Russia** arranged the delivery of vast quantities of Champagne produced to suit his own tastes, in special "crystal" bottles, for his own personal

consumption. Many

years later, another Master of all the Russias, **Nikita Krustchev**, was another well-informed lover of Champagne.



Edouard VII

**Edward**, like a number of other British monarchs adored a sparkle that was "so Frenchy". Today, great men of the world each have their favourite Champagne and their choices are as varied as their political beliefs.



Tsar Alexander I

"A feast of oysters" by Jean-François de Troy



Madame de Pompadour



## An inspiration

Champagne loosens tongues and sharpens pens. In 1752, Voltaire wrote of *"the sparkling froth of these fresh wines is the sparkling image of us, the French"*. **Alfred de Musset** began his great love affair with **George Sand** in Majorca declaring that

Champagne would make him witty and indeed, a little mad. Another great writer, **Alexandre Dumas**, claimed that he placed a glass of Champagne beside his inkwell in order to give his pen a sparkling inspiration.

Great musicians were also moved by Champagne: **Beethoven** wrote a symphony of praise to the wine, but

**Wagner**, bitterly disappointed by the failure of Tannhauser in Paris, was reconciled with France only thanks to this wine *"which alone had renewed his zest for life"*. At the turn of the

century, painters were frequently depicting



Manet "Bal aux Folies Bergères"

Champagne in their works. You can see it in the paintings of **Utrillo** and **Toulouse Lautrec**, and **Manet** paints the wine in his *"Bal aux Folies Bergères"*, and between the two lovers in *"Chez Father Lathuile"*.

## A star for the stars

The bubbles of Champagne are naturally at the tables of film and theatre stars. **Marlene Dietrich** wrote that she loved Champagne because *"it gives the impression that it is Sunday and that the*



Marilyn Monroe

Greta Garbo in "Ninotchka"



*best days will soon be upon us"*. In *"Ninotchka"* **Greta Garbo** plays a Russian girl who discovers Champagne when visiting Paris and among many other film stars, **Audrey Hepburn**, **Jeanne Moreau**, **Marilyn Monroe** and **Juliette Binoche** all loved Champagne, while **Mistinguett** and **Maurice Chevalier** celebrated it in songs.

## A wine for romantic heroes

From **Pushkin** to **Henry Miller**, from **Hemingway** to **Balzac**, from **Maupassant** to **Colette**, **Françoise Sagan**, **John le Carré** and **Ian Fleming** - creator of Champagne connoisseur James Bond - innumerable novelists have given the heroes and heroines of their books more than the odd glass of Champagne. **Truman Capote**, that most provocative of

American writers, claimed that to laugh in the face of death, nothing worked better than a glass of Champagne. Author, statesman and man of taste Sir **Winston Churchill**, wrote that Champagne should be a daily delight for those who knew the true meaning of life.



Sir Winston Churchill



James Bond, "Tomorrow never dies"



Ava Gardner and Charlton Heston in "55 days in Peking"



Alexandre Dumas



Utrillo



# the gift of exhilaration

Champagne  
Charlie



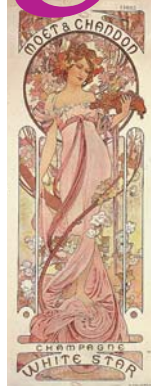
## A magic sparkle

There is no Champagne without the magic presence of its delicate and elegant bubbles. Over the years, the Champenois have learnt how to master this sparkling which originally surprised but

delighted them. This sparkle is special, because it springs naturally from the slow work of the yeast fermenting in the cool cellars of Champagne. The persistence of the bubbles in the glass is another delightful mystery. For several minutes the bubbles form and re-form, dance, swirl and rise to the surface as if drawn to the sky, the symbol of the grace and wit of these very special wines. Their delicate exuberance is a truly delightful invitation to festivities.



Casanova



Alfons Mucha, White Star

## The joy of life

It was at the end of the 18th century that the Champenois really started to master the sparkle. The wine was no longer the sole prerogative of

the clergy and could assume its rightful place as guest of honour at **secular festivities**. Its seductive lightness enchanted and delighted the dilettantes of the 18th century.

## Philip of Orléans'

wife tells of the passion of the ladies of her time for "the wine of the popping corks".

It was drunk at the **intimate suppers at the Palais-Royal**. The records that remain show considerable orders from Madame de Pompadour



Philip of Orléans



A banquet at  
the House of  
Nanni by  
Rezzonico

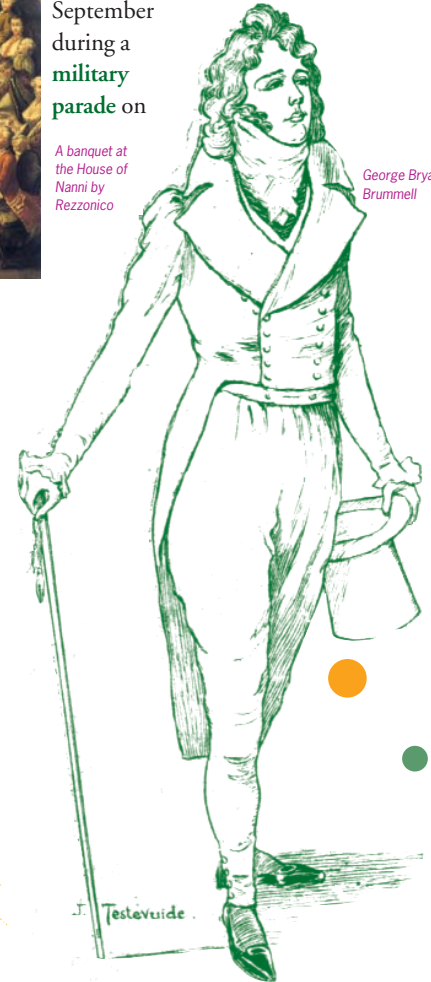
for her **outdoor feasts**. No fewer than 100 bottles of Champagne

the royal court and for **dandies** like Beau Brummel and Sheridan. When Tsar Alexander organised a dinner lasting four days in September during a **military parade** on

were drunk at a **masked ball** given at the Hôtel de Ville in 1765. Casanova mentioned Champagne as one of the indispensable accoutrement for his evenings of seduction.

## International reputation

The wines of Champagne travelled very early on. Dogged and adventurous Champenois set out to make them known **on every continent**. The first to become enamoured of these wines were the English. Champagne became a "must" at



George Bryan  
Brummell



French  
cooking  
expert  
Carême



the  
Camp de  
Vertus in  
the heart  
of

Champagne, guests were served a menu created by the great French chef Carême and the wines of Champagne were the main accompaniment.

Only a few years later, glasses of Champagne were raised in New York and on the coast of California as the New World discovered the delights of these wines.

By the end of the 19th century, the wines of Champagne had gained

a reputation throughout the world of being the ideal wines for **joyous gatherings** to which one wanted to give panache and a touch of class.

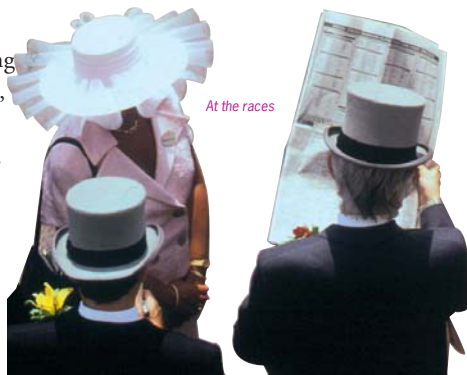
## Popularity

The ever-increasing speed of transport, particularly the spread of railways, allowed

Champagne to be at festivities everywhere, but it was in Paris that it became indispensable. It was served in the cafés on the Grands Boulevards - at the Café Anglais, at the Tour d'Argent, at the Jockey Club and at the Olympia Tavern. It was ordered by everyone and was called simply "Champ".



Prussian War, it became a democratic drink. **Feydeau** and **Offenbach** mentioned it in works like "Take care of Amélie"



A poster for a Paris production of Die Fledermaus



while in Johann **Strauss'** Die Fledermaus, they sing "His Majesty Champagne is King, let us line up under his

rule". Glasses are also raised in **Verdi's** La Traviata. When the

whole of Europe was living in **the golden years** of the 19th century, those at the height of fashion were prepared to try anything as long as it included Champagne. They ordered it in all the most fashionable places - in Paris, Deauville, Biarritz and Monte-Carlo. Of course it was served at all the great society events - **Boni de Castellane** had Champagne at his parties in his pink marble palace and it was served at **the balls of Princess Murat** or Clermont-Tonnerre,

whose famous **Persian parties** made their mark with their contemporaries. Along with madcap decorations and hundreds of guests in sumptuous fancy dress, there were elephants, horses - and fountains spouting Champagne! **Generosity**



"Masked Ball at the Theatre"  
by Alois Schonn



The Olympia  
Tavern

"The Scandinavian Performers' lunch in Skagan" by Peter Severin



been almost unthinkable to have a celebration without Champagne. Whatever the occasion, be it an imperial event, like that organised by the

When General Eisenhower set up his headquarters in Reims in February it was clear that **the Liberation of France** would be celebrated with Champagne -and what a party that was! Since the beginning of the 20th century, Champagne has become the wine that unite people and guarantee conviviality. In recent years,

late **Shah of Iran** in the ruins of Persepolis to celebrate

American troops during the Liberation of France



Bicentennial celebrations of the French Revolution

**bicentennial of the French Revolution** or the opening of the **World Cup.**

Champagne is present at film festivals, cultural exhibitions, sporting occasions, commemorations and anniversaries. Naturally enough, Champagne has also become the favourite wine at **new year's eve.**

the 2500th anniversary of the creation of the Persian Empire, or more popularist such as the celebrations of **the**



A Champagne picnic at Ascot

