CHAMPAGNE:
FROM STILL TO SPARKLING WINE

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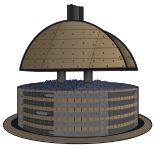
THE BEGINNINGS



- **Early 17th century:** the Champagne region invents a method of pressing that makes it possible to obtain white wine from black grapes. The "grey wine" produced in this way is recognised as being of high quality.
- **1668: Dom Pierre PÉRIGNON** initiated practices that heralded the excellence of Champagne's wines:
  - Care over the quality of the grapes
  - A rational approach to blending
  - Meticulous winemaking

- **End of the 17th century:** corks started to be used in Champagne.

To improve the storage and transportation of their wines, producers in Champagne began putting them in bottles rather than in barrels. The bubbles resulting from the fermentation of the wine were trapped in the bottle and only revealed in the glass. The aristocracy developed a taste for this sparkling wine. At this early stage, the effervescence was of a somewhat random nature, but winemakers in Champagne sought to tame it...

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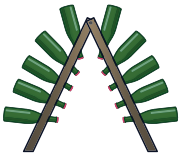
THE MASTERY OF EFFERVESCENCE



- **Early 18th century**: French glass-makers adopted a manufacturing method from England. This enabled the production of stronger bottles, better able to contain the pressure.
- **1816**: "riddling tables" (which later became racks) were invented to bring the lees deposit into the neck of the bottle. The "disgorging" process then removed it.
- **1837**: **Jean-Baptiste FRANCOIS**, a pharmacist in Châlons, used a densimeter to measure the quantity of sugar to be added to the wine to obtain optimal effervescence.

- **1844**: a metal cap covering the cork and held in place by a wire cage was invented.
- **1850**: **Edme-Jules MAUMENÉ**, a chemist in Reims, created the aphrometer, a device for measuring the pressure in bottles.
- **1857**: **Louis PASTEUR** began his work on fermentation. He discovered the existence, role and functioning of yeast, thereby enabling him to control the fermentation of wine.

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Emile MANCEAU, an oenologist in Champagne, later demonstrated that yeasts have different characteristics and behaviours depending on the composition of the wine and the terroir in which they come from.

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CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH

- **Today**: in its quest for excellence, the Champagne industry continues to refine its understanding and techniques, particularly in regards to pressing, yeast selection, the role of oxygen, gas exchanges, the effects of light, etc.

O_2

CO_2

The stages in Champagne production have been mastered and have remained unchanged since the 19th century. However, the Champagne industry continues to innovate both in terms of perfecting production tools and finding solutions to reduce its impact on the environment.

Further information : **champagne.education**