

# La Lettre

from Champagne DRAPPIER

## Why is Champagne the wine of celebration?

From the echo of its popped cork, to its coppery gold colour, and fine effervescence, Champagne has become a legend. Historians will say that it is a fantastic commercial victory. And they would be right, Champagne producers paved the way for today's marketing methods long before the advent of the modern world. But that is only part of the story. What is the real source of the magic of Champagne that happens every year during the holiday season?

Reims has been «la Ville des Sacres» since the baptism of Clovis in 496. With the coronation of 31 Kings in Champagne, local wine production would be forever linked to the founding myth of France and the opulence of its celebrations which took place in the “Salle du Festin” in the still existing Palais du Tau. The Royal Court brought with it the intoxicating memory of these champagne celebrations, along with the fashion for sparkling wine from Champagne so dear to Louis XIV.

Capitalizing on the growing aura of their wine, Champagne producers seized the opportunity of the market right nearby: Paris and Versailles. In 1728, Louis XV, who loved Champagne as much as his father, had a decree issued that authorized the bottling of Champagne. At the time all other wines were transported in barrels. Champagne producers used the bottle as a promotional tool. Pioneers in the art of the label, they had no qualms about featuring pictures of famous people to vaunt the

merits of their production. The 19th century again reinforced the image of Champagne which overflowed on royal tables and in embassies all over the world.

Champagne was taken up by the bourgeoisie and new affluent classes all over the world, thanks to the development of rail networks. Producers who had become «brands» used the new technologies of the era to increase their renown. The first known advertising film in history, created by the Lumière brothers, promoted a Champagne brand!

Hence is Champagne merely a combination of luck, smart commercial decisions and effective promotional methods? If we look at the Edict formulated by Louis XV: « *That those who use wine from Champagne prefer that which foams to that which does not. That this wine shall not be transported in casks,*

(...)



At Christmas in Cape Town, it is in the garden and with a Magnum that one enjoys the reversed seasons of the southern hemisphere. Thanks to Jollette Steyn of Wine Cellars in South Africa for this lovely picture.



either within the Kingdom or in foreign countries without totally losing its quality», that set the tone. Since the 18th century, the quality of Champagne has been inseparably associated with its bubbles, for which it is appreciated all over the world.

A hostile, cold land, where vine growing is tough and difficult, Champagne gave birth to a wine that is at once complex and aerial. Much envied, this typicality has never been challenged by History. One might have expected that the French Revolution would have hurt this symbol so closely linked to the monarchy. On the contrary, Voltaire, an Enlightenment thinker, even dedicated a poem to Champagne: «From this fresh wine the sparkling foam / From our French people is the brilliant image». The revolutionary Danton, a native of the Aube region, was also a



Carte d'or at the heart of a family celebration in Paris in November, 2019, on the occasion of Hanukkah.

great connoisseur of Champagne wine. As for Napoleon, we know his legendary enthusiasm for Champagne, which he recommended drinking even in the event of defeat.

And Champagne certainly has endured many defeats in its history. From Attila to the bombing of Reims and the Battle of the Marne, without forgetting the One Hundred Year War, the land of Champagne has seen all of the nations of the world confronting each other. This once battered, ever-resilient land has given birth to a truly distinctive wine: Champagne, the symbol of the most important celebrations, that of reconciliation and peace. Was it not with a glass of Champagne in hand that General de Gaulle regained a liberated France? Apart from its royal or presidential prestige, and, it must be said, its value, as Champagne admittedly has its price, it is the intrinsic qualities of this wine and in particular its fine bubbles that explain why it is served at celebrations. In fact, compared to certain strong alcohols or too rich or sometimes «heavy» wines, the lightness of Champagne, its freshness and digestibility have made it the king of celebrations. So let us celebrate the end of the year with the most joyous, festive wine of all, at home with family, or at the restaurant. And since we are no longer allowed to embrace each other freely, let us make a special toast, with our arms and our glasses outstretched, as a sign of sharing, love and hope. Long live Champagne, and long live celebration!



Anders Thörback, president of the trade association IF Metall in Sweden, defends the interests of employees, which does not prevent him from loving Champagne and its great Men. Winston Churchill tattooed on the left thigh and Charles de Gaulle on the right one. He is surrounded by André, Hugo, Michel Drappier, and Dosseh, a musician and composer from Togo, July 2020.



## MONTE-CARLO

SOCIÉTÉ DES BAINS DE MER

Champagne Drappier Carte d'Or is now the Champagne served at receptions at the very prestigious SBM in Monaco (Hôtel de Paris \*\*\*\*\*, Hôtel Hermitage \*\*\*\*\*, Monte Carlo Beach \*\*\*\*\*)



## BARROS

In Braga, on the East coast of Portugal, the weather is mild all year long, you can sip a glass of Carte d'Or on a terrace and try the daring pairings of the rotisserie, «Churrasqueira Barros».

## HC HOTEL & SPA

DU CASTELLET \*\*\*\*\*

At the restaurant of Christophe Bacqué (3 Michelin stars), you can savour a pure, precise Brut Nature to perfectly accompany contemporary, refined cuisine.



## CHAMPAGNE DRAPPIER ON THE SCREENS



rtbf.be

In Belgium, a program on life in the harvest opened with André and Gabrielle Drappier, the carefree 9th generation!

Belgium, TV news, 27 August 2020



sky news

Michel Drappier delivered a positive message about Champagne in light of the current situation on the international news channel.

United Kingdom, TV news, 29 July 2020



tv asahi

Japan's second national television channel delivers beautiful images of maison Drappier in the midst of the harvest.

Japan, TV news, 22 August 2020

## CLAREVALLIS

on social media



For Manuel Peyrondet, Meilleur Sommelier de France 2008, and Meilleur Ouvrier de France: «it is love at first sight». On the Instagram account of his private wine club, *Chais d'Oeuvre*, he says «a bomb that stopped time.»



On the account of Nicolas de Rouyn, Editor in Chief of *Magnum Magazine*, «Low dosage and organic, it ticks all the boxes; in addition, it is very good and the bottle turns out to be a source of frustration and leaves you wanting more. Go for the magnum.»

## QUATTUOR

is one of the 10 best organic wines, and the best Champagne in the selection «*The Global Organic Masters 2020*» of *The Drinks Business*.

«The best candidate was a Champagne, and a remarkable one from Maison Drappier. A glass of complex, balanced and totally seductive Champagne.»



## GRANDE SENDRÉE 2008

scored 94/100, has been chosen by James Suckling for its selection «*12 Great Value Vintage Champagnes*».

JAMESUCKLING.COM

## BLANC DE BLANCS 2012

1<sup>st</sup> out of 500

September, 2020, ranked by Andreas Larsson Meilleur Sommelier du Monde, and founder of *TASTED*.

«Very nice grip with a bright acidity and good extract of yellow fruit flavours, a fine creamy texture and a long lingering finish.»





# Drappier, unique in more ways than one



The first specificity of Drappier is that it is an Aube house. And « So what ? », today's oenophile is likely to ask. This is a valid response but thirty years ago, proudly announcing your intention of relying on a beautiful vineyard located around Urville, in the south of the département, to play in the big league of the great houses, was by no means a given. The cellar masters of Reims or Epernay, who themselves stocked up abundantly in the region, nevertheless scornfully referred to this origin as « Champagne de trace » (one that "stains the wine, with

a quite heavy character). André Drappier and his wife created their non-vintage Champagne brut, Carte d'Or in 1952 at a time when very few people dared to pursue such an ambitious vision of independence, terroir and identity.

Michel, the son, was so demanding when it came to putting his values into action, that Drappier succeeded in placing his vineyard right where it deserved to be, in the closed circle of the great Champagne origins.

You had to be daring to create a brand of brut seventy years ago, and the house could have made Danton's famous words its own: «daring, more daring, and ever more daring!» In a Champagne region that sometimes rests too much on its laurels, Drappier has always created, innovated, and perfected.

From parcel selection (la Grande Sendrée), Blanc de Blancs, and Brut without dosage (« Nature »), to no dosage and sulfite-free, their blend of rare and ancestral grape varieties (les arbanne, petit meslier, blanc vrai combined with chardonnay for la cuvée Quattor), rosé, vintages and even a cuvée in homage to one of their extremely loyal, prestigious clients, Charles de Gaulle, Maison Drappier, led by Michel, has continued to innovate without ever losing sight of the house's founding values, vision and soul.

However, the third characteristic which makes Drappier so unique is perhaps even more important than the two abovementioned ones. I would summarize it in this way: transmission. The family has been based in Urville since 1808.

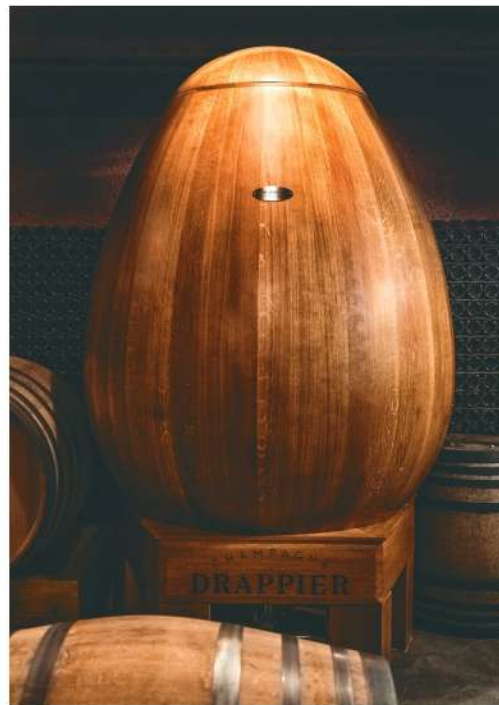
In spite of my great age, I have only seen three generations of Drappiers in action: the patriarch, André, my peer, Michel and his children, Charline, Hugo and Antoine.

In a world of Champagne houses where families have often been replaced by groups, where sometimes the families still in place get torn apart or lose interest in all or part of the activity, I am struck by the harmony and complementarity so clearly evident when I have met any of the members of this family. There is a unique blend of responsibility and initiative that is extremely satisfying to witness, which seems to say, «Among the Drappiers, we are never bored.» And this is as it should be because we are never bored when tasting Drappier champagnes.

Thierry Desseauve

## L'Ovum : ready to hatch in 2021

L'Ovum (Egg in latin) joined our circle in 2011. The cornerstone of our collection, Ovum has been meticulously observed, studied and tested from every angle (!) in order to mature an unprecedented vintage wine. Regular tastings of the maturing wine have confirmed the properties of this perfectly organic shape, the dimensions of which correspond to the golden number, bringing extraordinary roundness and precision. We are very excited to reveal la Grande Sendrée 2012 "Ovum", which has been in the cellar for eight years, and which will be released at the end of 2021.



To contain the future vintages, a new OVUM has been designed, using an innovative technique without any visible strapping which required the involvement of several Meilleurs Ouvriers de France. The delicate assembly of the staves required a team of coopers for nearly five months.

Domaine : Champagne DRAPPIER – Rue des Vignes – 10200 Urville

[www.champagne-drappier.com](http://www.champagne-drappier.com) – [info@champagne-drappier.com](mailto:info@champagne-drappier.com) – (+33) 3 25 27 40 15

This newsletter, n°58, is printed on ecological, long-life certified paper without any chemical additives.

♣ CHAMPAGNE DRAPPIER, first carbon neutral house.

It was written by Charline and Michel Drappier.

  
C H A M P A G N E  
**DRAPPIER**  
MAISON FAMILIALE DEPUIS 1808  
URVILLE - FRANCE