

Champagne Taittinger

Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger, President of Champagne Taittinger, discusses the evolution of the iconic champagne

In a few months time, the family champagne house is going to plant a number of vines in the UK near Chilham, Kent so that in a few years we can produce a sparkling wine of great quality, under the name of "Domaine Evremond". The British market is the premier export market for champagne, and as such our brand has been present in Britain for many years. It was my grandfather Pierre Taittinger, in 1932, who acquired the third oldest champagne house "Forest et Fourneaux" which was founded in 1734. No longer having any direct descendants involved in the business, we decided to transform this house and give it the name 'Taittinger' in the first part of the 20th century. It has since become one of the most renowned champagne brands in the world today.

Taittinger owns a very important vineyard (290 hectares, which is rare in champagne) which ensures the consistency of all its cuvées year-on-year, both for the style and quality of the grapes produced. In addition, Taittinger possesses an admirable historical heritage, including its Gallo-Roman Crayères in Reims, which welcomes more than 100,000 visitors per year and which has recently been declared a world heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Champagne producers mainly use three vine plants: Pinot Noir, which brings richness and power, Pinot Meunier, which accentuates the ageing process and Chardonnay, which is synonymous in champagne with elegance and finesse. In our champagne house, we favour this third grape variety in the assembly of our cuvées. Thus, Taittinger's elevated and delicate style has become symbolic, illustrated by the cuvée 'Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs' (100% chardonnay), made exclusively of grapes from the Grand Crus Villages in the Côte des Blancs



Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger has been President of Champagne Taittinger since 2007. He is the grandson of Pierre Taittinger, the founder of the champagne house. Born in 1953, he studied at Jesuit Colleges in Reims and England before graduating from business schools in Reims and Paris. In 1976, he joined the family business, working as a salesman alongside his Uncle Claude. After the sale of the Taittinger group to Starwood in 2005, Pierre-Emmanuel bought back the champagne house.

area near Epernay. It was this cuvée which was chosen by Ian Flemming in his novels and in the James Bond movie "From Russia with Love".

Since 1983, our champagne house has produced 14 limited edition bottles (produced in a very small number), each one vintage and decorated by world renowned artists including Victor Vasarely, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg and many others who have illustrated the 'Taittinger Collection'. Recently, it was the Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado, who signed the Vintage 2006 with a magnificent snapshot. Champagne Taittinger has also organised 'Le Prix Culinaire', an international competition for chefs for 50 years. It is considered by the greatest chefs like 'Mount Everest' in terms of difficulty and prestige. Many English chefs have participated in this competition and a British final was formed recently after a few years of absence.

Taittinger is the largest eponymous brand of champagne. Its directors sign their name on each one of these bottles produced and consumed in the world which further guarantees the authenticity of these cuvées. **1**



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**FROM VINEYARD
TO WINE – BLENDING**

The art of blending is to marry wines of different varieties, crus and years – to create a wine that is superior to the sum of the wines that compose it – all the while maintaining the identity and style of the House. Once the blending is finished, the resulting wine is bottled with a liqueur composed of yeasts and sugar and then undergoes bottle fermentation.

Terminology

Crus: a vineyard or group of vineyards, especially one of recognised quality

Cuvées: a blend of more than one grape from specially selected barrels or vats



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