

# Wine Spectator

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BONUS  
TOP 100  
VALUES

# THE TOP 100

The most exciting wines of 2012  
**PLUS: WINE OF THE YEAR**

TOP CHAMPAGNES AND  
SPARKLING WINES

HOLIDAY PARTY MENU

VAIL GETAWAY: SKI, EAT, DRINK

DEC. 31, 2012 - JAN. 15, 2013

\$5.95 US

53>





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## New Releases: France

**92 Bertrand-Delespierre Brut Champagne Tradition NV \$63** A well-cut, mineral version, with overtones of smoke and roast nut accenting flavors of grilled plum, date, whole-grain toast, anise and Meyer lemon. Clean and fresh, with a fine, creamy mousse. Better than previously reviewed. Drink now through 2020. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 835 cases made.—A.N.

**92 Diebolt-Vallois Brut Champagne NV \$54** Like an orchard in late spring, this blends floral and fruit notes of ripe apple, white cherry and apricot. There's a firm backbone of zesty acidity and underlying minerality, with a lingering hint of ginger on the finish. Drink now through 2020. 1,666 cases made.—A.N.

**92 Jacquart Brut Champagne Mosaïque NV \$37** Rich, featuring an undertow of smoke and roasted nut mixing with flavors of black currant, lemon meringue pie and ground ginger, with a hint of honeycomb. Refined in texture and framed by well-knit acidity, with a lasting, mineral-tinged finish. Drink now through 2020. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 125,000 cases made.—A.N.

**92 Lanson Brut Champagne Extra Age NV \$109** Racy and well-cut, with a fine, lightly chalky texture supporting notes of pastry dough, cassis, graphite and toasted almond. An elegant version, with some power behind the graceful form. Drink now through 2020. 400 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 J. Lassalle Brut Champagne Préférence NV \$48** Lightly chalky in texture, with racy acidity imparting a mouthwatering quality to the tightly knit flavors of green pear, apricot, oyster shell, pastry dough, honey and lemon zest. Drink now through 2017.—A.N.

**92 Philippe Prié Brut Champagne Cuvée Archange NV \$85** Rich and expressive, this is focused by racy, well-knit acidity, offering layers of patisserie apple, pastry dough, crystallized honey, lemon zest and black currant candy. Minerally finish. Drink now through 2020. 833 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Domaine Chapuy Brut Champagne Tradition NV \$37** The lively bead carries flavors of black cherry, bread dough, ginger, fleur de sel and toasted raisin bread, while firm acidity provides a backbone and drives the crisp, mineral-accented finish. Drink now through 2018. 2,080 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Colin Brut Champagne Cuvée Alliance NV \$41** Open-knit and fresh, offering layers of apple tarte Tatin, almond cream, black currant candy and a hint of coffee liqueur. Finely textured, with a lasting, mineral-accented finish. Drink now through 2020. 1,250 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Forget-Brimont Brut Champagne NV \$80** Firm and focused by racy acidity, this is lightly chalky in texture, offering tightly knit flavors of ripe Gala apple, anise, black currant candy, fresh ginger and biscuit. Shows fine balance. Drink now through 2018. 16,500 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Jean Lallement Brut Champagne Cuvée Réserve NV \$68** Black currant candy, toasted raisin bread and date flavors meet hints of lemon zest, oyster shell and pastry dough in this well-knit version. Features a fresh, lightly toasty finish. Disgorged April 2011. Drink now through 2017. 28 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 J. Lassalle Brut Champagne NV \$44** Open-knit and accessible, with a lively bead and flavors of apple puree, briny mineral, pastry and mandarin orange. Balanced, with a mouthwatering, chalk-tinged finish. Drink now through 2018.—A.N.

**91 Taittinger Brut Champagne La Française NV \$50** Hints of marzipan and lightly charred toast add richness without overwhelming the flavors of poached

pear, lemon curd and black currant in this lively, showing a creamy, detailed texture. Drink now through 2018. 3,200 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Nicolas Feuillatte Brut Champagne NV \$36** Flavors of poached pear, kumquat, blackberry, biscuit, ginger and licorice mix in this well-knit version. Features a modest, lightly smoky finish. Drink now through 2014.—A.N.

**90 Gardet Brut Champagne Première NV \$49** Subtle and well-knit, with hints of marzipan accenting white cherry, toasted candied lemon zest flavors. Offers a fresh, lively finish. Drink now through 2014. 500 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Lanson Brut Champagne Black NV \$50** Firm and smoky, offering flavors of cake, bread dough, lemon zest and toasted raisin bread. Lively bead. Moderate finish. Drink now through 2020. 270,000 cases made.—A.N.

**90 Ernest Rapeneau Brut Champagne Réserve NV \$50** Floral and aromatic, with a lively bead and flavors of apricot, Gala apple, fresh lemon and biscuit. Citrusy acidity keeps this lively to the zesty, spice-tinged finish. Drink now through 2014. 750 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Charpentier Brut Champagne NV \$70** Open-knit and frothy in texture, with a lively bead and hints of bread dough, lemon candy and nut. Offers a fresh, modest finish. Drink now through 2014. 20,000 cases imported.—A.N.

## FRANCE Champagne / Non-Vintage Brut Blanc de Noirs

**92 Jean Laurent Brut Blanc de Noirs NV \$60** Mouthwatering, this rich blend carries flavors of black cherry, crystallized honey, almond and grilled plum, with refined texture and acidity. Offers a long, creamy finish. Disgorged July 2011. Drink now through 2022. 3,300 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Stéphan Coquillettes Brut Blanc de Noirs NV \$65** Balanced, firm, well-knit acidity. Elegant overall and with a lively texture, offering a subtle range of macerated flavors of black currant, lemon pound cake and toasted hazelnut, with a lingering note of smoky mineral. Drink now through 2017. 516 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Egly-Ouriet Brut Blanc de Noirs NV \$160** A hint of caramelized, lightly charred brioches, with flavors of roast plum, toasted walnut, black currant and pastry cream. Shows good cut throughout. Disgorged July 2011. Drink now through 2018.—A.N.

**91 Jean Laurent Brut Blanc de Noirs NV \$60** Mouthwatering, with lively flavors of black cassis, gingerbread, crystallized honey and lemon zest. This shows a fine, creamy balance and length. Disgorged April 2012. Drink now through 2017. 3,300 cases made.—A.N.

**90 Gonet-Médeville Brut Blanc de Noirs NV \$60** This is fresh and open, with a lively bead and flavors of black cherry, lemon meringue pie, with a hint of fresh mineral-tinged finish. Drink now through 2014. 3,300 cases made.—A.N.



## FRANCE

## Champagne / Non-Vintage / Brut Rosé

**92 Lanson Brut Rosé Champagne Noble Cuvée NV \$140** Flavors of ripe cherry, pastry dough, plum, fresh ginger and blanched almond are framed by firm acidity and lightly chalky, yet refined, texture. Floral and spice notes accent the lingering finish. Drink now through 2018. 40 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 J. Lassalle Brut Rosé Champagne NV \$62** A delicate, expressive version, offering fine texture and well-knit structure. The base note and flavors of biscuit, gumdrop, and ground ginger are in perfect balance. Drink now through 2020.—A.N.

**91 Colin Brut Rosé Champagne NV \$52** Lightly chalky in texture, this balanced version is juicy and shows flavors of black cherry puree, wild strawberry and graphite, with lots of ground spice and a zesty finish. Drink now through 2018. 400 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Christian Coquillet Brut Rosé Champagne St.-Chamant NV \$75** Subtle, yet offering a firm backbone of well-integrated acidity and a range of currant, fresh plum, whole-grain toast and macerated peach flavors. Features a zesty finish, with a hint of ground ginger. Drink now through 2018. 75 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Lanson Brut Rosé Champagne Extra Age NV \$130** Very smoky, showing racy acidity and a creaminess to the texture, with flavors of toasted brioche and nut, ripe black cherry and grilled plum, accompanied by a hint of briny mineral. Fresh finish. Disgorged December 2011. Drink now through 2018. 200 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Moët & Chandon Brut Rosé Champagne Impérial NV \$50** A smoky, fresh rosé, lightly chalky in texture, showing delicate flavors of crème de cassis, gumdrop, grilled plum and ground spice. Minerally finish. Drink now through 2018.—A.N.

**90 Nicolas Feuillatte Brut Rosé Champagne NV \$48** Firm, with a lively bead and a minerally base note mixing with flavors of grilled plum, white raspberry, biscuit and candied orange zest. Ground ginger and white pepper accents linger on the finish. Drink now through 2017.—A.N.

**90 Lanson Brut Rosé Champagne NV \$60** Fresh and aromatic, with an overtone of orchard blossom to flavors of black cherry candy, gumdrop, pound cake and fresh ginger. Offers a clean, minerally finish. Drink now through 2017. 85,000 cases made.—A.N.

**90 Pehu-Simonet Brut Rosé Champagne NV \$62** Open-knit, with a lively bead and subtle notes of ripe plum, white cherry, biscuit and grated ginger. Fresh finish. Disgorged March 2011. Drink now through 2017. 45 cases imported.—A.N.

## FRANCE

## Champagne / Non-Vintage / Other

**92 Chartogne-Taillet Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Cuvée les Heurtebises NV \$66** A creamy mousse reins in the powerful structure in this firm, well-knit and balanced version. Offers rich notes of fresh quince, lemon curd, smoked almond, honeycomb and bread dough. Disgorged July 2012. Drink now through 2022. 56 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Chartogne-Taillet Extra Brut Champagne Les Barres NV \$101** Fresh, with an aromatic floral overtone and a delicate, airy bead belying the intensity.

kumquat and ginger notes. Drink now through 2020. 42 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Colin Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Blanche de Castille NV \$49**

Expressive and aromatic, this well-cut version shows fine texture and flavors of black raspberry, gingerbread, toasted hazelnut and candied orange zest. Racy, with a lingering, mineral-tinged finish. Disgorged March 2012. Drink now through 2020. 1,250 cases imported.—A.N.



RICHARD & ROMAIN COLIN  
Owners & Winemakers

**92 Lanson Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Extra Age NV \$130** Soft and creamy in texture, with a floral overtone and a minerally base note accenting the flavors of orchard fruit, pastry, kumquat and pickled ginger. Fresh, with a clean finish that echoes the mineral note. Drink now through 2020. 200 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Chartogne-Taillet Extra Brut Champagne Orizeaux NV \$86** Firm and lightly chalky in texture, with a rich, smoke- and mineral-tinged base note. This is finely balanced and sleek, offering flavors of toasted hazelnut, honey, poached green apple and pastry dough. Creamy finish. Disgorged July 2012. Drink now through 2020. 13 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Mailly Extra Brut Champagne NV \$60** Balanced and appealing, with an open-knit structure and accessible flavors of *cannelé*, poached apple, black cherry candy, citrus zest and pickled ginger. Offers a fresh, mineral-tinged finish. Drink now through 2018. 1,500 cases made.—A.N.

**89 Laurent-Perrier Brut Nature Champagne Ultra NV \$80** Firm and toasty, offering a base note of roasted almond and flavors of spiced plum and dried apricot, with a hint of fruit cake. Features a clean, crisp finish. Drink now through 2015. 175 cases imported.—A.N.

## FRANCE

## Champagne / Vintage / Brut

**93 Duval-Leroy Brut Champagne Femme 2004 \$65/\$75ml** Fresh and focused, with a fine, creamy texture and rich flavors of dried apricot, white cherry, mirabelle plum, pastry dough and ground ginger. There's lovely integration, bolstered by a long, minerally finish, with accents of honey and citrus zest. Drink now through 2022. 5,000 cases made.—A.N.

**93 Gosset Brut Champagne Grand Millésime 2004 \$100** Evocative of finely cut crystal, this offers a firm backbone of acidity structuring refined texture and a lovely blend of apricot, brioche, acacia blossom, black cherry and crystallized honey, with a firm, mouthwatering finish. Drink now through 2024. 667 cases made.—A.N.

**93 Lanson Brut Champagne Gold Label 2002 \$80** A smoke-tinged powerhouse, with a minerally undertow and firm acidity, offering refined texture and a subtle range of ground spice, ripe plum, whole-grain toast, crystallized honey and candied lemon zest notes. The creamy finish shows a hint of savory fleur de sel. Drink now through 2027. 20,000 cases made.—A.N.

**93 Lanson Brut Champagne Noble Cuvée 2000 \$160** Racy acidity and fine texture frame this smoky version, with roast nut and oyster shell accents to the subtle flavors of buttered brioche, glazed apple and pear, spring blossom and lemon zest. Drink now through 2020. 100 cases imported.—A.N.

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