

HAND PICKED SELECTIONS

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Character Counts!

Wine & Spirits December 2011



YEAR'S BEST CHAMPAGNE

Bertrand-Delespierre

The estate is located in Chamery, a premier cru village in the Montagne de Reims. Didier Bertrand owns 25 acres of vines, most of it pinot meunier, for which Chamery is known. He keeps his wines on the lees for at least three years, crafting broad, earthy Champagnes.

BEST BUY

91 pts. - 2004 Champagne Brut 1er Cru

Remarkably youthful for its age, both in color and flavor, this wine is fresh and intense, tinged with tobacco aromas and sweet spices that give it a seductive complexity. It's substantial and robust enough to serve with lamb stew.

Jean Laurent

Farming 39 acres from his base in Celles-sur-Ource in the Aube, Laurent specializes in pinot noir-dominant cuvées, aged at least three years on the lees. The Blanc de Noirs is entirely pinot noir (he doesn't grow meunier), and the local chalky soils come through in a limestone minerality.

BEST BUY

90 pts. - Champagne Brut Blanc de Noirs

Golden in color with a raspberry essence behind its bubbles, this wine has a lasting red glow. There's a scent of caramel and bacon up front, then red fruit takes over, adding body and firmness. Refreshing and stylish fizz for a wild mushroom tart.



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