

HAND PICKED SELECTIONS

established 1985 · celebrating 25+ years of quality, character and value



Character Counts!

12/4/11

SFGate

Champagne's culture clash lets the little guys sparkle

Jon Bonné - Sunday, December 4, 2011

- click here to read more: http://articles.sfgate.com/2011-12-04/food/30476445_1_chartogne-taillet-ambonay-champagne-lover

Champagne's culture clash has gotten complicated.

Once, the balance of power sat with the big brands that dominate liquor store shelves and spend big dollars tapping, say, Karl Lagerfeld to finesse their aesthetics.

On the other side were little guys, usually grower-producers who made their own Champagnes in tiny quantities and rarely had more of a marketing budget than a sign on the side of their cellars.

NV Jean Laurent Brut Rosé Champagne (\$58)

Laurent works in the south, in the Aube village of Celles-sur-Ource. This is Pinot Noir territory, and distinct flavors of raspberry, woodruff syrup and orange define this wine. Amid the ripe fruit, accents of wintergreen, bread dough, rye spice and chalk help round it out. This is muscular, fulfilling rosé Champagne. Disgorged May 2011.



In short, we are witnessing a definitive split between the old Champagne, governed by habit and fear of change, and the new Champagne, which hinges on the quest for authenticity. This new Champagne may never be in the majority, but it's increasingly dominating the conversation. The result is a diversity of Champagne like we've never seen.



Imported by Hand Picked Selections, Inc.
Warrenton, VA · www.HandPickedSelections.com
www.facebook.com/HandPickedSelections

HAND PICKED SELECTIONS

established 1985 · celebrating 25+ years of quality, character and value



Character Counts!

12/11/11

SFGate

Champagne's Aube region gets a moment to sparkle

Jon Bonné - Sunday, December 11, 2011

- click here to read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/12/11/FD351M9I5A.DTL&ao=3>

The southern region of Champagne known as the Aube has long been an also-ran, growing grapes in large quantities for influential houses up north in Reims and Epernay. It has been a reliable engine of the region's growth but rarely given its due. Now the Aube is ready for its close-up.

...

Within the past couple years, this pastoral area two hours southeast of Paris has become a darling, driven by a new generation of Champagne vintners who have turned to this unheralded spot, also known as the Cote des Bar, in the hope of pursuing greatness on a small scale.

NV Jean Laurent Blanc de Blancs Brut Champagne (\$45)

Profound blancs de blancs can be found from such producers as Jean Laurent... Laurent works in Celles-sur-Ource, and this all-Chardonnay bottle from several vintages shows the potential of white grapes there. After time to breathe, it matches a steely iodine presence with rich hazelnut, key lime, sea bean, peach and pastry dough. Disgorged May 2011.



Signature of place

Our conclusion: Regardless of grape, there's an unmistakable signature of place - the wines show a weightlessness and bite reflective of all that limestone. Aube Chardonnay can evoke Chablis with bubbles; Pinot Noir often reveals white-grape flavors and savory aromas that nod to Burgundy. These are not only very good Champagnes; they are true to their origins.



Imported by Hand Picked Selections, Inc.
Warrenton, VA · www.HandPickedSelections.com
www.facebook.com/HandPickedSelections