

CHAMPAGNE

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SALON  
*Le Mesnil*

## Champagne Salon 1999

Salon 1999 Champagne  
Natural sophistication  
37th and last vintage of the 20th century,  
Salon 1999 Champagne has stirring perfection,  
the future power of an adolescent.  
Devilish beauty

### PRESENTATION

37, the final count. There have only been 37 years worthy of Salon Champagne during the entire 20th century.

37 vintages, all different, all sublime, all unique, like this exceptional Salon Champagne, for which the word "one" is of prime importance: originally the champagne of one man, Aimé Salon, cultivated on one stretch of land, the Côte des Blancs, from one vineyard, Mesnil-sur-Oger, from one type of grape, Chardonnay and one year.

1999 is the thirty-seventh and last vintage of the 20th century: a wild nature, to be tamed, with power and expectancy, looking to a glorious future, still imminent. It has the crazy charm of adolescence, this devilish beauty that is being transformed into magnificence.

### THE VINTAGE

The most abundant grape harvest in the history of Champagne! One of the warmest years of the century! But, on the heels of a fairly mild winter and a warm early spring came a series of hailstorms. The weather settled and the Chardonnay grape flowers bloomed on 11 June – magnificent. Rain in early July and a surprise month of August: a cold spell and an eclipse of the moon on the 11th. The harvest promised to be splendid, started well but ended with rain. Production, which was already significant, increased further. However, some winegrowers were able to reduce the weight of the vines at the right time: as a result, the wines gained in alcohol content (an average of 10%) with a low level of acidity of 6.3% due to the heat of the summer and rain during picking. Powerful, profound, lively and complex wines.

### TERROIR

Soil and vintage: adolescent turmoil

What is this conflict, this duel creating confusion in 1999 Salon? Will soil or the vintage reign victorious over the other?

On one hand, the chalky "minerality" and vivacity specific to the soil of Mesnil-sur-Oger. On the other, the depth and sensual roundness that reflect the character of the vintage, without the over-ripeness sometimes found. It is from the tension between these forces that the 1999 Salon takes its personality – this delicate balance between proud adolescence, created from the potential of decades, given by its immense "minerality", and its youthful ardour, extensive but under control. Fine character and devilish charm.

### VARIETALS

Chardonnay 100%

### SERVING

Savour it, drink it barely cold, between 13° and 15°. Sensual pleasure assured.

### TASTING

A very pale yellow with barely green hints and a lively nose but still discreet, 1999 Salon, with its clear immediate taste, has that juvenile grace that captures the palate, itself straight, firm and textured. A quite natural sophistication that is a gift and persists just like the creamy bubbles. Brioche, white bread, white blossom, white fruit and bitter almond flavours are still developing.

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### Champagne Salon

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The middle palate and aftertaste are crystalline and it has a lingering finish with hints of citrus. Ten years is all it has taken the 1999 Salon to reach dazzling maturity. Decades will follow.

**FOOD PAIRINGS**

Exquisite, delicate, gracious and subtle dishes. Warm oysters and Aquitaine caviar, a lightly cooked sea bass with a truffle risotto or calf's sweetbreads with morel mushrooms. An excellent Parma or Iberico ham, the centre of a Parmesan cheese, aged for thirty-six months. Or simply by itself, with grilled almonds.

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