

# MAISONS MARQUES & DOMAINES



MAISON FONDÉE EN 1776

**LOUIS ROEDERER**  
CHAMPAGNE



Champagne Louis Roederer

## Cristal

Champagne, France  
Vintage: 2002

### Overview

In 1876, Tsar Alexander II - already a great lover of Louis Roederer wines - asked Louis Roederer to 'take the exercise still further' and create a cuvée for his personal use which was unique, in terms of both its style and the bottle. Louis Roederer offered him an exceptional crystal bottle, holding the fruit of vines selected from the seven great crus on his estate. The chardonnay and pinot noir grapes provide the subtle, precise balance that has now become synonymous with the leading prestige cuvée of Champagne.

Cristal is Louis Roederer's flagship cuvée. It was created in 1876 and is composed of Grand Crus from the Montagne de Reims, the Marne Valley and the Côte des Blancs.

### Winemaking

Cristal is produced using only the finest vintages from crus guaranteed to originate from the Louis Roederer vineyard. Matured for an average of 5 years in the cellars, Cristal is left to rest for 8 months after disgorging to complete its maturation.

### Tasting Notes

Brilliant yellow with light amber highlights. A beautiful mousse with fine cordon of persistent and regular bubbles. The nose is intense and delicate. Revealing a clean and well-blended mixture of flavors of honey, cocoa, lightly toasted hazelnuts, candied citrus fruit... without exuberance, but luxurious simplicity. On the palate, a savory explosion of ripe fruit on the attack, revealing red fruit, white chocolate, caramel and Danish pastry, typical of Cristal. Silky, concentrated texture, leaning on intense, powerful and vinous structure, but maintaining refinement. The palate builds up to attain a delicious sensation of a well-blended harmony of flavors. A fresh finish with a hint of bitterness making it almost crunchy. All the exceptional characteristics of the 2002 vintage have literally been captured in this 2002 Cristal, which is generous and lush, revealing perfect balance between concentration and finesse, freshness and vinosity, intensity and refinement. In three words: proud, rich and luxurious.

### Harvest Notes

This was a characteristically dry, warm year with outbreaks of heavy rain. August was a month of extremes, with rain followed by scorching temperatures then violent thundery intervals. An anticyclone at the start of September gave way to rain towards 8 September followed by fine weather that lasted throughout the harvest with the exception of light drizzle. The vintage was marked by the outstanding quality of the grapes, registering a degree of alcohol content rarely achieved in Champagne.

An early maturing year brought about by dry soil conditions that accelerated ripening; work in the vineyards to improve the quality of the yield: targeted manuring at the start of the season; pruning to restrict yields; crown suckering of fruit-bearing shoots to remove excess clusters; green harvesting over a total 20-hectare area; sunny conditions throughout the month of September. These conditions allowed the team to start harvesting on September 12 in the Côte des Blancs, September 13 in the Marne Valley, and September 16 in the Montagne de Reims. Harvesting in each vineyard sector lasted 13 days and pickers were in excellent spirits. The quality of the grapes was remarkable throughout the vineyard.

### Food Pairing

The strength and finesse of Cristal are perfectly suited to delicate foods. It is a flattering accompaniment to caviar, fish and shellfish such as scallops, John Dory, lobster and crayfish. The ideal serving temperature is between 46°F and 50°F.

### TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals: 55% Pinot Noir, 45% Chardonnay