

MAISONS MARQUES & DOMAINES



MAISON FONDÉE EN 1776

LOUIS ROEDERER
C H A M P A G N E



Champagne Louis Roederer

Cristal Vinothèque

Champagne, France
Vintage: 1996

Overview

Cristal Vinothèque 1996 celebrates the astonishing story of a very small number of bottles, stored in the Louis Roederer cellars for 20 years in the quest for perfect harmony. The 1996 vintage is the reflection of this very classic year in Champagne. The weather conditions created an exceptionally elegant wine structured by a lovely acidity and remarkable aromatic complexity. Its perfectly balanced maturity and well-integrated flavours have been brought out even further by the Côte des Blancs Chardonnays and a small proportion of Pinots noirs grown in chalky soil.

Winemaking

This cuvée is bottle-aged for 10 years before being left to rest for a further 10 years after disgorging.

Tasting Notes

Bright and clear with a golden yellow hue and delicate amber tints. Fine, delicate mousse forming tight bubbles in the glass. The bouquet is remarkably intense, lively, concentrated and complex. The nose opens with fruity aromas which is unusual for a 22-year-old wine: ripe pear and apple, apricot, zesty notes of candied lemon, yuzu and orange peel. After aeration the aromas evolve to hot stone, chalk, smoke, mocha, hazelnut and fresh pastries.

On the palate the wine is concentrated with a rich, almost oily, texture that continues on to the mid-palate thanks to the wine's chalky, saline freshness. The texture becomes more pronounced with a powdery minerality on the tongue. The finish is lively, saline and very long.

Harvest Notes

After a cold, grey winter, 1996 was characterised by low rainfall throughout the growing cycle. This drought caused all of the Champagne varieties, especially the Chardonnay, to produce small grapes. This resulted in low yields which aided ripening and fruit concentration. September was relatively cool yet very sunny, with a few rainy spells which enabled the grapes to ripen well and develop high levels of sugar and acidity. The traditional grape tasting at harvest time astonished us all as, in addition to the excellent sugar-acidity balance, we had small, concentrated berries with an aromatic maturity rarely seen in Champagne. All of the criteria for a "vintage" year were confirmed on the 21 September when harvesting began.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Varietals: 55% Pinot Noir, 45% Chardonnay