THE CHALK SEA

# CHAMPAGNE
## REFERENCE GUIDE

PEOPLE · PLACES · GRAPES · STYLES · AROMAS

A quick reference to the region's grapes, villages, styles and signature aromas — and the chalk, climate and people that make them extraordinary.

## THE GRAPE VARIETIES

SEVEN GRAPES. A THOUSAND EXPRESSIONS.



### PINOT NOIR
*Structure & Depth*

The backbone of Champagne. Gives structure, red fruit, scale and aging potential.

**AROMAS**
Red apple · Cherry
Raspberry
Dried flowers
Forest floor

### MEUNIER
*Fruit & Generosity*

Adds roundness, fruit and approachability. Brings charm in youth and richness in blend.

**AROMAS**
Pear · Yellow plum
Apricot · Honeysuckle
Soft spices

### CHARDONNAY
*Purity & Finesse*

Brings elegance, tension and mineral precision. The soul of the region's chalk.

**AROMAS**
Citrus · White peach
White flowers
Almond · Chalk
Salinity

### ARBANNE
*Rarity & Lift*

Low yields. Vivid acidity and delicate floral notes. Adds complexity.

**AROMAS**
Citrus blossom
Green apple
White flowers
Mineral notes

### PETIT MESLIER
*Freshness & Detail*

High natural acidity. Delicate aromas. Increasingly rediscovered.

**AROMAS**
Green apple
Citrus
White flowers
Herbs

### PINOT GRIS
*Texture & Richness*

Adds texture, fullness and subtle spice. Used in small amounts.

**AROMAS**
Pear · Quince
Stone fruit
Honey · Spice

### PINOT BLANC
*Harmony & Elegance*

Brings roundness and floral notes. Often used to enhance balance.

**AROMAS**
White peach
White flowers
Almond
Soft spice

## CHAMPAGNE STYLES

A SPECTRUM OF EXPRESSION.



### NON-VINTAGE
The house style. Consistency and balance.

### VINTAGE
A single year. Greater depth and complexity.

### BLANC DE BLANCS
100% Chardonnay. Precision, elegance and minerality.

### BLANC DE NOIRS
100% Pinot Noir or Meunier. Structure and richness.

### ROSÉ
Red fruit, texture and complexity.

### PRESTIGE CUVÉE
The house's finest expression. Depth and longevity.

## KEY TERMS

| | |
|---|---|
| **Assemblage** | A blend of wines, often from multiple vintages, villages and grapes. |
| **Blanc de Blancs** | Champagne made exclusively from Chardonnay. |
| **Blanc de Noirs** | Champagne made from Pinot Noir and/or Meunier. |
| **Cuvée** | The first, high-quality juice from pressing (also used for a finished wine). |
| **Disgorgement** | Removal of lees after ageing, with dosage added. |
| **Dosage** | A small amount of sugar added after disgorgement to balance the wine. |
| **Extra Brut** | 0–6 g/L dosage. |
| **Grand Cru** | The highest village classification (17 villages). |
| **Lees** | Spent yeast cells; ageing on lees adds complexity and texture. |
| **Méthode Champenoise** | Traditional method: secondary fermentation in bottle. |
| **Montagne de Reims** | A key region, known for Pinot Noir. |
| **Pressing** | Gentle pressing of whole clusters. |
| **Riddling** | Gradually turning bottles to collect lees in the neck. |
| **Rosé** | A rosé Champagne, made by blending or short maceration. |
| **Sec** | 17–32 g/L dosage. |
| **Terroir** | The combination of soil, climate, topography and human influence. |
| **Vintage** | Made from grapes of a single exceptional year. |



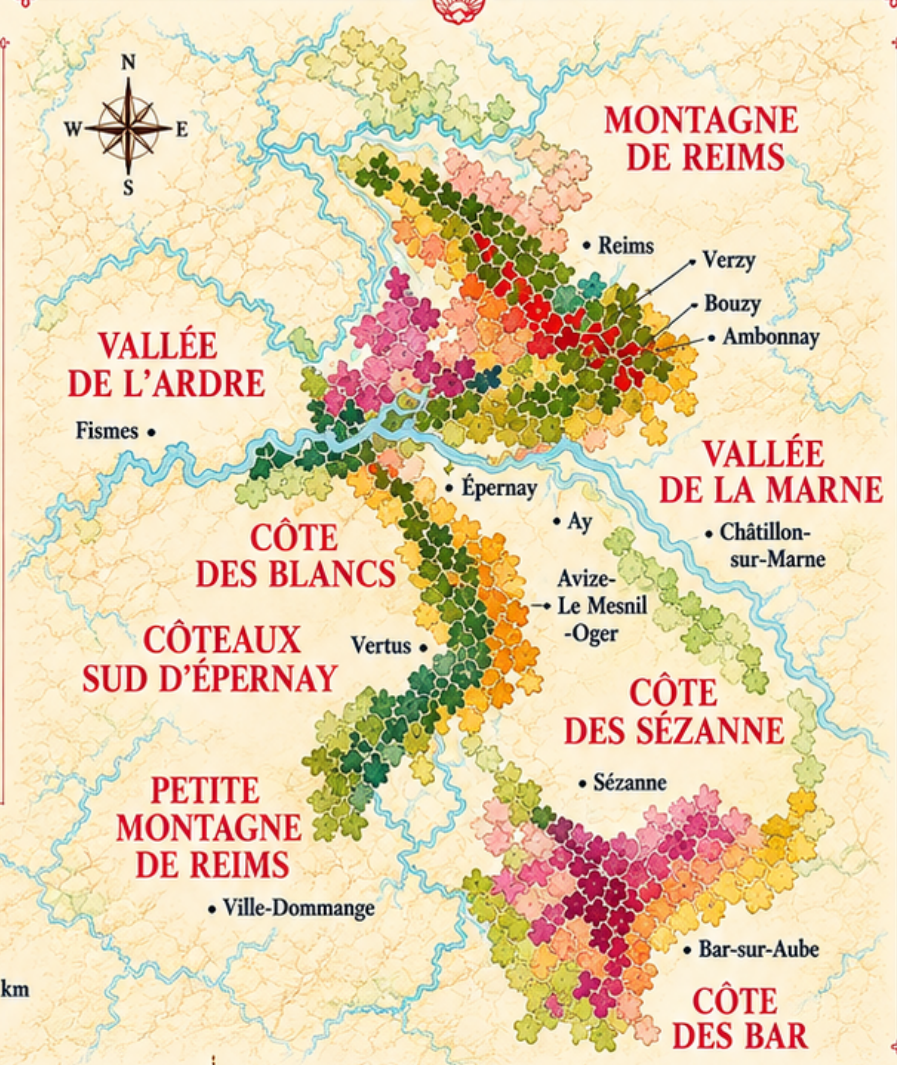
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# THE CHAMPAGNE VINEYARD

17 GEOGRAPHICAL SECTORS. A WORLD OF NUANCE.

## THE 17 GEOGRAPHICAL SECTORS

1 Montagne de Reims
2 Vallée de la Marne
3 Côte des Blancs
4 Côte de Sézanne
5 Côte des Bar
6 Petite Montagne de Reims
7 Coteaux Sud d'Épernay
8 Vallée de l'Ardre
9 Massif de Saint-Thierry
10 Monts de Berru
11 Vallée de la Suippe
12 Coteaux du Vitryat
13 Montgueux
14 Vallée de l'Aube
15 Vallée de la Seine
16 Terres de Châlons
17 Coteaux de l'Ouest




## THE VINEYARD LANDSCAPE

Champagne's 34,000 hectares of vines are planted across distinct landscapes, each shaped by chalk, climate, topography and human influence. The 17 geographical sectors capture this diversity, from the cool, elevated slopes of the Montagne de Reims to the sun-drenched hills of the Côte des Bar.

## CHALK, SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

The region's chalk soils retain moisture, moderate temperature and give Champagne its unique character. Vineyards range from gentle slopes to steep hillsides, with varied exposures and elevations that influence ripeness, acidity and style.



## GRAND CRU VILLAGES

17 VILLAGES. THE PINNACLE OF CHAMPAGNE.

### MONTAGNE DE REIMS

Ambonnay
Beaumont-sur-Vesle
Bouzy
Louvois
Mailly-Champagne
Puisieulx
Sillery
Verzenay
Verzy

### VALLÉE DE LA MARNE

Aÿ
Tours-sur-Marne

### CÔTE DES BLANCS

Avize
Chouilly
Cramant
Le Mesnil-sur-Oger
Oger
Oiry

## OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS

### PREMIER CRU

44 villages.
High quality,
just below Grand Cru.

### AUTRE CRU

The remaining villages in Champagne, each with its own character.

### LIEU-DIT

A specifically named vineyard or parcel, increasingly used on labels.

### SINGLE VINEYARD

Champagnes from a single, designated plot, expressing a unique terroir.

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# AROMAS & FLAVORS

## A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Champagne's aromas evolve beautifully with age, from fresh and vibrant to rich and complex.



### YOUTH (0–3 YEARS)

Citrus
Green apple
White flowers
Fresh pastry



### MATURITY (3–10 YEARS)

Stone fruit
Brioche
Nuts
Honey
Dried flowers



### AGE (10+ YEARS)

Dried fruit
Toasted nuts
Truffle
Violets
Spice



### SECONDARY & TERTIARY AROMAS

Bread
Biscuit
Brioche
Toast
Hazelnut
Mushroom
Forest floor

## DOSAGE CLASSIFICATIONS

SWEETNESS STYLES IN CchampagNE

Dosage is the small amount of sugar added after disgorgement, shaping the wine's final balance and style.



| BRUT NATURE | EXTRA BRUT | BRUT | EXTRA DRY | SEC | DEMI-SEC | DOUX |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 – 3 g/L | 0 – 6 g/L | 0 – 12 g/L | 12 – 17 g/L | 17 – 32 g/L | 32 – 50 g/L | 50+ g/L |
| Bone dry. Pure expression of terroir. | Very dry. Crisp and mineral. | Dry. The classic style. | Slightly off-dry. Rounder and softer. | Noticeably off-dry. Richer style. | Sweet. Lush and indulgent. | Very sweet. Rare today. |

## PRODUCTION METHOD

TRADITIONAL METHOD (MÉTHODE CHAMPENOISE)



**Pressing**
Gentle pressing of whole clusters.

**First fermentation**
In tank, producing a still base wine.

**Second fermentation**
In bottle, creating natural bubbles.

**Lees ageing**
Bottles rest on lees, developing complexity.

**Disgorgement**
Lees are removed and dosage added.

## KEY INFLUENCES



### TERROIR

Chalk soils, climate, topography and human influence give Champagne its unique character.



### CLIMATE

A cool climate preserves acidity and freshness, essential for elegance and longevity.



### PEOPLE

Generations of growers and houses have shaped Champagne's identity and worldwide reputation.



### STYLE

From non-vintage to prestige cuvées, a spectrum of expressions united by freshness, finesse and complexity.