

Académie du Champagne



Session 2019

Académie du Champagne

36, PLACE DU FORUM

Reims

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL HOUSE RUINART

Mr. Chairman,
Academicians and Friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Champagne Ruinart was delighted and honored to represent the Champagne Academy as Presidential House in 2019. Huge thank you to the Vice-Presidential Houses Louis Roederer and Taittinger for their constant and generous support throughout the year! This Presidency would not have been possible without the 16 Grandes Marques in providing help, creativity and of course champagnes and experiences during this unforgettable immersion week! Once again, thank you to the 16 Maisons for their contribution. A huge thank you to our amazing chairman, Ms. Alice Archer for her passion, her devotion and her wonderful organization. We were very happy to take this journey together.

The 2019 educational trip was deeply intense as always, under the sign of passion, discovery, learning and sharing. Each year, we continue to be very impressed with the calibre of the candidates. We would like to congratulate Julie Dupouy, Sommelier and Consultant at Chapter One in Dublin and 2016 3rd World Best Sommelier who won the 2019 Champagne Academy Silver Ice bucket and who passed with honors! Huge congratulations to our two ex-aequo, who were not far behind Julie: Tim Triptree, International Director at Christie's and Master of Wine and Angus Barcroft, Trade Sales Account Manager at Lea & Sandeman in London. And finally, congratulations to third runner-up who completes this podium, Sara Guiducci, Head of Private Client Sales at Stannary St. Wine in London. Congratulations again to our 16 candidates, from 2019, for their amazing performance and great spirit!

This 63rd edition marks the history of the Champagne Academy once more and this organization would not be possible without the hard and tireless work of the wonderful Val Simpson. Merci Val for making the organization of the year perfect as always!

All the dinners were a great success and such a treat with amazing food pairings and amazing venues: The Bulgari in Knightsbridge for the Annual Dinner, the Scottish Dinner at The Balmoral Hotel in Edinburgh, the Northern Dinner at the Chester Grosvenor, the West Midlands Dinner at Park Regis Hotel in Birmingham, and the Irish Dinner at the Merrion Hotel in Dublin.

We thoroughly enjoyed every moment of our Presidency and are now handing over to Taittinger. We will be delighted to offer our support as Vice Presidential House alongside Bollinger. We wish everyone a fantastic Champagne Academy 2020!

Frédéric PANAIOTIS
Champagne Ruinart
Presidential House of the Champagne Academy 2019

2019 HARVEST REPORT

Over the past recent years, every harvest has been quite extraordinary, as in out-of-the-ordinary. 2019 was no exception, displaying further signs of the current climate change. Yet it resulted in an exceptionally great vintage. The kick-off of the season was complicated, but the hot and sunny climate of August and September, combined with cool nights as the harvest approached, made it possible to harvest grapes at full maturity. Indeed, 2019 was once more a challenging year in Champagne!

After a dry and mild winter, the Champagne region faced some challenges during spring. May experienced several thunder storms which slowed down the cycle of the vine despite the slight head start taken at budbreak. Spring frosts, between early April and early May, affected approximately 5,000 hectares, the equivalent of 1,000 hectares destroyed at 100%, or 3% of the total Champagne area.

The average flowering date for all varieties combined was calculated for 18th of June. Blooming took place in good conditions for the Pinot Noir and Meunier but not the case of the Chardonnay. We had thus some millerandage, particularly in the Côte des Blancs region. Even though flowering was 6 days later than the 10-year average, the situation changed quite radically in the second half of June. A first heatwave struck but a wet spring made sure there was enough water for the vines. The end of July saw a second heatwave of exceptional proportions smashing the heat record of 2003 with recorded temperatures of over 40. The heatwave was short-lived but the damage was severe. In Champagne, almost 11% of the harvest potential was destroyed by scalding. Very unusual in Champagne!

We started taking the first maturation samples on August 19th. The evolution of maturity was exceptionally fast, increasing with about 2 potential degrees per week instead of the usual 1 to 1.5. Over the past 10 years, 2019 was the vintage with the highest level of total acidity at an equivalent degree. Then, total acidity finally decreased due to warm temperatures during the end of the month.

We also observed a disconnection between sugar level and phenolic maturity of the grape, particularly marked in a hot year like 2019, which pushed us to be patient and thus reach high potential degrees, around 10.5 on average. At Ruinart, we had analytic parameters during harvest time similar to the 2002 vintage. Quite promising, isn't it?

2019 kicked off at the beginning of September in the Aube region in very serene conditions, and mostly around the 12th of September in the different areas. We had thus perfect conditions to pick up the grapes including sunny days, cool nights, and dry weather. A noticeable element of 2019 is the shortening of the time between flowering and the harvest kick-off, which is around 81 days this year, substantially shorter than the 92 days on average over the past decade.

The base wines are resting in the winery and we are now tasting all of them to create the assemblages. Good news, there will probably be a Dom Ruinart 2019!

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019

The final words from my predecessor, past-Chairman Marcus Little, to me when passing over the chain of office were 'may your glass always be full'. I've tried my best to follow that instruction this year.

My year in office kicked off with a packed Vintage Tasting at Vintners' Hall, the spiritual home of the wine trade. Here we had wines from 2005 to 2012 on show, and Academicians spanning 52 vintages in attendance. The Chairman's charity for the year was introduced as Diabetes UK. Diabetes affects more people in the UK than cancer and dementia combined and as yet has no cure. Over the year we raised a spectacular £6,265. This money will go towards the research projects into both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, and towards supporting those living with the disease today. Thank you, all, for your generosity.

The CIVC description of Spring is highly apt for life on the Champagne Academy committee after the AGM and Vintage Tasting have been wrapped up:

"Seasonal growth resumes, and with it the daily round of tasks aimed at meeting the challenges ahead. The ultimate success of the crop will depend on unceasing vineyard maintenance from this point forward." Many meetings, phone calls, and the diligence of our Administrator prepared us for the year to come.

On 20th May 2019 Academicians and Shippers alike flocked to the Bvlgari Hotel in Knightsbridge for the Annual Dinner. After the reception which showed off our brand-new Champagne Academy ice buckets, kindly sponsored by the shippers, we dined in the spectacular ballroom of the Bvlgari. The dinner wines this year were the bright, crisp Louis Roederer Brut Nature 2009, the ever reliable Ruinart Rosé, the impressive Dom Ruinart 2007, and the hugely refreshing Taittinger Nocturne Sec. At the menu tasting we were all blown away by the excellent combinations that Chef Adriano Cavagnini had created for us. Finally, we introduced the first card payments at a Champagne Academy event, using an iZettle to sell raffle tickets and Champagne Academy merchandise to great success.

At flowering time, I travelled to Champagne to join the 2019 candidates on the Academy course. This was a studious group, and the calibre of candidates was such that we really did not have any idea who the Silver Ice Bucket winner would be until the final exam scores were added up and sorted. There were five candidates within three points of each other, but Julie Dupouy nudged into the lead on that last day and was lauded as a worthy winner by all. I must thank all the team at Ruinart for outstanding organisation of the course this year, in particular Caroline Fiot and Alice Brunet. Once again I am astounded by the lengths each and every house goes to to make the Champagne Academy course exciting, different, and relevant every year - it really is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

July saw the passing of a Champagne trade great – Simon Leschallas. For many years Simon was responsible for Bollinger's work within the Academy, making every effort to attend as many events as possible to make sure their presence was always there. This he continued with his support of Champagne Charles Heidsieck in recent years. For the Academy Committee it was a true pleasure to give him an Honorary Membership of the Champagne Academy in 2014 and he told many of us how delighted he was to receive it. To a one, we all have extremely fond memories of Simon, but most of all we loved the way he epitomised the true meaning of what being part of an organisation such as the Champagne Academy really means.

Harvest time saw a swift succession of regional dinners; Scotland first in the stately Sir Walter Scott room of the Balmoral Hotel. After that it was on to Chester, where we returned to Michelin star quality food for 120 guests at the Chester Grosvenor. Honorary Academician Simon Radley did us proud once again. The Midlands dinner was hosted overlooking the spectacular Birmingham skyline from the Park Regis Hotel. This dinner saw the latest finish of all; even the Irish, once again back at the Merion Hotel in Dublin in November, couldn't outdrink the Midlanders this year. I'd like to thank all four regional dinner organisers, David Ramsey, David Garlick, Kevin Skeet, and Mal Deveney, for their tireless work towards these events over so many years.

Our final event, the Autumn Function, is fast becoming a highlight of the Academy year in its new look as an 'Alternative Cuvée' tasting. At the unique venue of BAFTA, this was an exciting evening once again providing the opportunity for houses to show more dynamic cuvées with many brand-new releases in the room. I always enjoy seeing Academicians carefully calculating their action plan for this tasting – Brut Nature or Blanc de Blancs first? The continued focus on education really gets to the heart of what the Academy is all about.

There were three firsts for this year's Autumn Function. Firstly, a new system for invitations and mailshots, and alongside this a simple, straightforward online booking system. There were some doubters when these steps in to the 21st century were proposed, but when the first booking made was by an Academician from 1959 just minutes after going live we knew all would be OK. These technological developments were masterminded by Paul Walker, 2019 Secretary. I look forward to more developments to come as Paul works his way up the Academy ladder. Thirdly, the 2019 Autumn Function saw the start of a relationship between the Champagne Academy and legendary glass producer Riedel thanks to vice-Chairman Andrew Fullerton. This is an exciting union designed to ensure we are always showing these wonderful wines in the best manner possible.

Paul and Andrew have been a great boon to me this year, as has Val Simpson, our ever-efficient administrator, Martin Dibben, our fastidious Treasurer, and Steve Winchcombe, our eagle-eyed stock controller. I'd like to thank them along with the rest of our committee of volunteers for all their help, support, and guidance over the year. I must also thank the Shippers, and one that stands taller than the rest. William Sharpley has been a stalwart of the Champagne Academy for nearly two decades now, so was just the man to guide Ruinart through their second time as presidential house.

It has been an honour to have been Chairman of the Champagne Academy this past year, and, as I pass the baton on, I would like to wish Andrew all the best for 2020.



Presenting cheque to diabetes UK.



Frédéric PANAIOTIS presenting Julie Dupouy with the Silver Ice Bucket and Alice.



The 2019 candidates and representatives from the 16 houses celebrating the end of the 2019 course.



Val Simpson, Frédéric Panaiotis, and Alice at the Midlands Dinner.



Frédéric Dufour, Caroline Fiot and Alice at the London Dinner.



Year 2019 with Alice enjoying their first AGM.



BOLLINGER

Champagne Bollinger has been part of the history of the Champagne region for 190 years, founded in 1829 the House remains resolutely independent and family owned.

March saw the launch of the 2008 vintage of La Grande Année at Bollinger in Aÿ. Gilles Descôtes, Champagne Bollinger Chef de Cave, presented the 2008 alongside produce selected from three of France's top producers and prepared by Michelin starred Chef Jean Sulpice.

The launch of the 2008 was also the perfect opportunity to celebrate the finest gastronomic pairings with this stellar vintage. In Great Britain this epicurean journey started at The Ledbury where Head Chef Brett Graham, created his perfect pairings with the spectacular Duchy Estate Helford Oyster and Hen of The Wood mushroom. This Grand Tour continued with a selection of Britain's finest chefs, bringing their talents together to work on a series of dishes, each focused on a signature ingredient to pair with La Grande Année 2008 and which featured in their restaurants throughout 2019; Ollie Dabbous of HIDE championed Crab, Gareth Ward of Ynyshir paired with Black Cod, Atul Kochhar of Kanishka with Roast Duck Purahah, Lisa Goodwin-Allen of Northcote chose Ossetra Caviar, Tom Kitchin of The Kitchin with Orkney scallops and Peter Joseph of Kahani using Malabar Prawns.

Bollinger joined the Hay Festival Wales as Official Champagne for the 32nd edition of the World's Leading Festival of Ideas. The festival also saw the prize giving for the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize for Comic Fiction. The prize is awarded to the novel deemed to best capture the spirit of the late PG Wodehouse and was won by Nina Stibbe for her pitch-perfect comedy, Reasons to be Cheerful, about love, lust and social angst at the dental surgery. Stibbe joins 19 previous winners including Helen Fielding, Hannah Rothschild, Howard Jacobson, Terry Pratchett and Will Self to name but a few.

It has been a busy year for Bollinger as Official Champagne of England Rugby with the Six Nations Championships as well as the Rugby World Cup in Japan. Needless to say we were extremely proud of the whole England squad and their performances at the Rugby World Cup in Japan and throughout 2019. We very much look forward to seeing how England Rugby build on these achievements and look forward to celebrating with them over the coming years.

In 1979 Bollinger first appeared on screen in Moonraker, becoming the Official Champagne for James Bond. To celebrate 40 years of exclusive partnership and to pay tribute to legendary designer Ken Adam's vision for Moonraker we revisit one of his most emblematic creations; the space shuttle. Bollinger enlisted designer Eric Berthes to re-imagine the Moonraker space shuttle - crafted from pewter and wood veneer, encasing a Saint Louis crystal ice bucket and a magnum of Bollinger 2007.

To mark the release of the upcoming film No Time To Die, the House has also created a limited edition dedicated to the 25th Bond instalment. Created entirely from Pinot Noir from the Grand Cru village of Aÿ this is the first time that both the vintage and village have been used exclusively to make a dedicated wine. The excellent 2011 harvest in Aÿ, produced complex, powerful and harmonious wines. No Time To Die is set for release in April 2020.

CHARLES HEIDSIECK

Founded in 1851 by the original 'Champagne Charlie' who popularised champagne in America with his extraordinary wines and dazzling character, Charles Heidsieck Champagne is today one of the world's most awarded champagne Houses.

In September the House released a remarkable cuvée from the 2008 vintage, Brut Millésimé 2008. Blended from ten Grands Crus and Premiers Crus meticulously selected by the House for their magnificent minerality and concentration and aged on the lees in Charles Heidsieck's 2000-year-old for ten years, Millésime 2008 already displays all the elegance and finesse of an outstanding vintage. The launch was marked by a special dinner at The Ritz hosted by Charles Heidsieck Managing Director Stephen Leroux, with food prepared by acclaimed Chef John Williams.

In July Charles Heidsieck offered a unique glimpse into Chef de Caves Cyril Brun's expertise as a master blender, highlighting the individual wines that form the Charles style. Coteaux Champenois Blancs is an exclusive tasting case of four Chardonnays from the crus of Villers-Marmery, Oger, Vertus, and Montgueux, wines that form the backbone of the Charles style. If that weren't enough, the House released the 1989 vintage in Jeroboam as part of its third Collection Crayères release from its prized collection of 'oenothèque' wines – special vintages held back in the House's Gallo-Roman chalk cellars. After more than thirty years ageing in the Charles Heidsieck's chalk cellars, this is the most recent time the House has bottled a vintage in Jeroboam.

The year saw continued recognition for the House's expertise and dedication. Chef de Caves Cyril Brun was named Sparkling Winemaker of the Year at the International Wine Challenge. Blanc des Millénaires was named Decanter's Wine of The Year and Best in Show at the Decanter World Wine Awards, also picking up a Gold Medal at the Sommelier Wine Awards. Charles Heidsieck's Blanc de Blancs was awarded the Non-Vintage Blanc de Blancs Champagne Trophy at the International Wine Challenge, and alongside Brut and Rosé Réserve, became a Gold Medallist at the Sommelier Wine Awards.

The House continued to celebrate its connections to sailing and fine cars, sponsoring the 'Champagne Charlie Regatta' at the Royal Southern Yacht Club in July, and becoming the official Champagne Partner for the Concours of Elegance (2019-2021). Held across three days at Hampton Court Palace, the Concours of Elegance brought together 60 of the world's rarest vintage cars. In the spirit of this fine event, the House raised a toast to the Aston Martin Zagato partnership with a Jeroboam of Charles Heidsieck 1989 vintage.

Though a scientist by training, Charles Heidsieck Cellar Master Cyril Brun has a small superstition around years ending in 9; these years are always fantastic for Charles Heidsieck. 2019 is no different. Despite a series of heatwaves in June and July, and some disease pressure, great conditions across helped to deliver fruit with incredible acidity, texture and body. "I'm very optimistic that we can bring a great Charles Heidsieck from 2019," says Cyril.

Let's raise a glass to 2019, another vintage year for Charles Heidsieck Champagne!

VEUVE CLICQUOT

Since its creation in 1772, Veuve Clicquot has played an instrumental role in establishing and evolving the Champagne industry as we know it today. The House owes its extraordinary reputation to a remarkably modern woman: Madame Clicquot, known by her peers as “La Grande Dame de la Champagne,” who took the lead of the House in 1805 becoming one of the first international businesswoman of all time. Her innovative spirit was born in 1810 when she created the first vintage wine of the Champagne region, whilst her daring, avant-garde ideals invented the first “riddling table” in 1816, as a way to clarify champagne. Adopted across the Champagne region, this method is still used today by all Houses.

In 1972, the Veuve Clicquot Business Woman Award was created as a tribute to Madame Clicquot, championing the success of business women worldwide who share her same qualities: her enterprising spirit, her courage and the determination necessary to accomplish her aims. Highly prized and sought after, it is the first international award created specifically to recognise the contribution that women have made to business life.

On 23rd May, 2019, the 45th Veuve Clicquot Business Woman Award was presented to CEO of Co-op Food, Jo Whitfield. 2019’s Veuve Clicquot New Generation Award, which recognises the success and vision of up-and-coming entrepreneurial business women was presented to Co-CEO of Darktrace, Poppy Gustafsson. 2019’s Veuve Clicquot Social Purpose Award was presented to CBE, Founder and CEO of Founders4Schools, Sherry Coutu CBE.

During the summer months, as champagne of The Season, Veuve Clicquot partnered with several stylish events across the UK, including a return to Wilderness Festival, Cricket at Lord’s, Goodwood Revival to name but a few!

The year was closed with two incredible events, that positioned Veuve Clicquot beyond the Champagne category and within the luxury & lifestyle territory. We launched our fifth annual celebration and exhibition of creative and cultural excellence, the Veuve Clicquot Souvenir bar by St Vincent. This platform allows Veuve Clicquot to seek influential creatives who have a passion project they wish to bring to life, mirroring the values of Madame Clicquot.

The first ever Veuve Clicquot concept retail space launched in Selfridges London in November 2019, built on 3 different pillars: a retail destination that showcases the limited edition Veuve Clicquot arrows, a boutique bar that includes the full range of Veuve Clicquot exceptional wines and a full immersive experience that bring to life the depth of our brand. The space is a permanent concept store until November 2021 animated by seasonal bespoke offers led by Moët Hennessy brands.

Join us online to stay up-to-date with all of the brand’s latest news, events and offers:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/veuvecliquot
- Twitter: @VeuveClicquotUK
- Instagram: @VeuveClicquotUK
- Website: www.veuve-cliquot.com

HEIDSIECK & CO. MONOPOLE

Founded in 1785 by Florens-Louis Heidsieck, Heidsieck & Co. Monopole is one of the oldest and most respected Houses in Champagne. Following the death of the founder in 1828 and with no immediate heir, the successors were his close relatives Henri-Louis Walbaum, Frédéric-Auguste Delius and Christian Heidsieck. In 1838 after several disagreements, the three nephews decided to part ways. Henri-Louis Walbaum continued in the business alone before joining forces with his brother-in-law Auguste Heidsieck. The company name therefore changes to "Walbaum Heidsieck & Co." In 1860 they establish the trademark "Monopole". The company name changes again in 1882 to "Heidsieck & Co." and finally in 1923, Édouard Mignot, founder of the grocery store chain "Les Comptoirs Français" adds "Monopole" into the company name.

Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Gold Top - Vintage 2009

Light yellow in colour, it boasts brilliant reflections which gives this wine its full lustre, which quite suitably matches this stunning vintage champagne. At first the nose is smoky, evolving towards notes of roasted, dry fruits and a hint of hazelnut. The next aromas are more rounded. The first is reminiscent of honey with gingerbread dominance. The olfactory exploration with pastry and buttery aromas continues to enhance the senses. A powerful and complex wine. From the first mouthful, the character and power of this vintage cuvee is confirmed. A very ample, round palate. A creamy champagne. This wine has good length. The tasting ends with aromas of grilled almonds. The balance of this cuvée is maintained with a fine acidic presence which bestows freshness (tasting note courtesy of The Champagne Company)

Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Cuvée Impératrice NV

Named after Eugénie, wife of Napoleon III, the last Empress of France. Quite a formidable woman, taking charge of the country whilst her husband was away at war. Her power is represented in this full flavoured wine. A blend of 50% Chardonnay/50% Pinot Noir from 1er Cru & Grand Cru grapes. It has aromas reminiscent of the chalk soil on which the vines are grown. The 1st assemblage of the wine, based on the 2006 harvest, is very fruit driven. On the nose yellow fruits – almost tropical - mango and peach, but there are also dried fruits and as the wine matures, gives way to more hazelnut & almond aromas. The bouquet both delicate & subtle, yet powerful & voluptuous, at the same time. There is an interesting roundness between delicacy, generosity and vivaciousness. On the palate there are honeyed apples and red fruits with a lemon sherbet finish. The soft fine mousse, which belies its maturity, makes this wine a perfect partner with food.

KRUG

Behind every precious drop of Krug stands the dream of a visionary. One man who, long before others, understood that the essence of Champagne is pleasure. So, over 170 years ago, Joseph Krug broke with convention to follow his vision. To create the most generous expression of Champagne every year, regardless of climatic unpredictability.

Joseph's bold experiment proved a triumph and he succeeded in creating Champagne like never before, and like no other Champagne House since.

To this day, the House of Krug lives and breathes his enduring philosophy, creating only prestige Champagnes since 1843.

Krug has remained a Champagne House on a human scale, preserving its savoir-faire and defending its unparalleled quality by choosing to offer a limited number of bottles. By overturning conventions and establishing its own rules, Krug divulges all the exuberance and expression of its Champagnes. Making Krug Champagnes arises from a long, painstaking and very human process; an art.

Depending on the talents and intuitions of a precious few, Krug's obsessive approach to details is the key characteristic of its savoir-faire which is based on three principles: - the individual selection of the plots and the careful following of each wine, - the art of blending and the creation of Champagnes by Krug's Chef de Caves and the Tasting Committee, and - the essential mastering of time, stretched to an unfashionably slow pace.

Krug Grande Cuvée is the archetype of Krug's philosophy of craftsmanship and savoir faire: a blend of more than 120 wines from ten or more different years.

Its exceptional finesse is the result of a stay of at least another six years in the cellars. around twenty years are needed to craft each bottle of Krug Grande Cuvée: the first prestige champagne re-created each year, beyond the very notion of vintage.

In 2019, Krug Champagne continued with the Edition story and released Krug Grande Cuvée 167th Edition, recreated around the harvest of 2011. Additionally, In October 2019 Krug Champagne revealed the latest member of Krug family – Krug 2006, revealed at Gibson Guitar Showroom alongside the Grande Cuvée recreated that year Krug Grande Cuvée 162nd Edition – Les Creations 2006.

Following the success of Krug Encounters - Tracks on Tracks in 2018, Krug continued with the musical Encounters platform partnering with the pop icon Neneh Cherry for Krug Encounters – Rhythm & Ride for a magical day of music, gastronomy & Krug Champagne in the sunny Kent countryside.

@krugchampagne

LANSON

The House of Lanson has a 260-year-old legacy. Founded in 1760, Lanson is one of the oldest Champagne Houses and remains one of the few Houses to make Champagnes using the traditional method by predominately avoiding malolactic fermentation. This allows its wines to age beautifully while retaining the fruit's natural acidity, flavours and aromas, giving Lanson Champagnes that refreshing, elegant purity.

Under the watchful eye of Hervé Dantan, Lanson's Cellar Master since 2013, the House continues to cultivate historical relationships with its wine growers who also share Lanson's pursuit of excellence. These relationships give Lanson access to more than 100 different crus, 50% of which are Grand Crus and Premier Crus. The House is also a pioneer when it comes to the environment. Lanson is committed to a global and sustainable programme to preserve biodiversity, with the aim of reducing the negative impacts of vine-growing by restoring the inner defences of the vineyard to ensure the preservation of the terroir. This commitment exceeds the requirements of the biodynamic viticulture specifications by taking the ideas of its growers further than any other Champagne House.

The philosophy of the House is also expressed through its cherished partnerships. Proud Royal Warrant Holders since 1900, The House of Lanson remains an official supplier to the Royal Family; and for 43 years, Lanson has been associated with The Championships, Wimbledon becoming the tournament's Official Champagne Partner in 2001. As a brand, Lanson embodies excellence, innovation and celebrates achievements - ethos that mirrors the world's most respected tennis tournament.

Lanson has also announced the appointment of a new UK Managing Director as it prepares for the launch of the brand's new 2020 Global advertising campaign and brand redesign. After four years as Lanson's UK Sales Director, Robert Rand has now assumed the role from Paul Beavis who left the company at the end of 2019.

Looking ahead to 2020, Lanson will be revealing its new look, new labels and its new advertising campaign at The Championships, Wimbledon (June 29-July 12). Alongside this, Lanson's Reims headquarters will also be undergoing a transformation. This major investment programme and its modernised its winemaking facilities – not to mention its unique collection of reserve wines and vintages dating back to 1904 – is destined to keep this multi-award-winning Champagne brand on the map for at least another 260 years.

LAURENT-PERRIER

In 2019 Champagne Laurent-Perrier introduced a new product, a new format of the Cuvée Rosé and relaunched its prestige cuvée Grand Siècle introducing the concept of iterations.

Launched in the spring Laurent-Perrier Blanc de Blancs Brut Nature showcases both Laurent-Perrier's expertise with Chardonnay and its innovative wine making. It is a 'sans dosage' champagne made from the best crus of the Côte des Blancs and the Montagne de Reims.

The Cuvée Rosé Jeroboam, also launched in the spring, was unveiled to bloggers and influencers in The Rose Room at the then recently reopened Annabel's in Mayfair.

In June, cellar master Michel Fauconnet came to London to introduce the concept of Grand Siècle Iterations at tastings for Fine Wine Merchants and journalists. Differentiating each iteration with a number: #22 for magnums and #24 for bottles enable consumers to identify the three component vintages of this multi-vintage prestige cuvée.

Taste of London continued to be Laurent-Perrier's main consumer activation aiming to connect with a younger demographic whilst experiencing drinking champagne in an informal setting. This was achieved by hosting Street Food Masterclasses with some of East London's finest street food purveyors such as BOB's Lobster, Pizza Pilgrims, and Santo Remedio. The event also supported The Passage, a homeless charity based in Westminster by donating £1 from each ticket and glass of champagne sold.

Coinciding with Taste of London, and in partnership with the Financial Times, were the FT Summer Menus. Ten renowned London restaurants ran bespoke menus including a glass of Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Rosé.

MOËT & CHANDON

2019 was really an amazing year for Moët & Chandon as it proudly celebrated the 150th anniversary of Moët & Chandon Impérial, the House's signature Brut champagne, that has epitomized its commitment to quality and excellence since 1869. To mark the occasion, a collection of limited-edition celebratory bottles were released and the majestically-restored Château de Saran was also unveiled after more than 4 years of works during an exceptional evening attended by some of the brightest stars of Hollywood including Natalie Portman, Uma Thurman and Douglas Booth, but also Kate Moss and Roger Federer, Moët & Chandon's Brand Ambassador since 2012.

The year got off to a fabulous start with Ascot Racecourse proudly announcing Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage as the 'Official Champagne of Royal Ascot' and Moët & Chandon the 'Official Champagne of Ascot' in a new four-year partnership running from 2019 to 2022. Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage, made only in remarkable years, was also the only champagne to be served to official guests of the Ascot Authority on race days, holding naming rights to the International Handicap Stakes on King George Day in July.

The year saw the continuation of Moët & Chandon's advertising campaign -"Life's memorable moments must be Moët & Chandon" - being shown across the country in cinemas, online TV, out-of-home as well as digital and social platforms.

In June 2019, for the second consecutive year, Moët Summer House opened its doors, bringing together tastemakers from the worlds of fashion, film, food and music to curate a three-day programme that captured the glamour of Moët & Chandon whilst celebrating the uniqueness and diversity of London.

Throughout the year, Moët & Chandon brought touches of magic and sparkle: from creating an enchanting Champagne Vault at The Lanesborough to bringing Christmas carols to The Blythswood in Scotland, and a series of champagne pyramids once again taking centre stage across the country as a signature symbol of the House.

We look forward to another year of excitement and success in 2020. Join us online to stay up-to-date with all of the brand's latest news and events:

- Facebook: @Moet&ChandonUK
- Twitter: @Moet&Chandon
- Instagram: @Moet&Chandon
- Website: www.moet&chandon.com

G.H.MUMM & CIE

After nearly 10 years at the helm, the departure of Champagne Mumm Chef du Cave in 2018 led to a long hunt for his replacement and in 2019 it was announced that Laurent Fresnet was to take up the post as of 1st January 2020.

With press comments such as ‘Persuading Fresnet to join Mumm is something of a coup for Pernod Ricard as he has established himself at Henriot as one of the region’s finest winemakers’, twice awarded ‘Sparkling Wine Maker of the Year’ will head up the team up Mumm which includes Magalie Marechal whom has been deputy Chef de Caves at Mumm for the last 19 years.

Born in Reims and raised in the Grand Cru village of Sillery, Fresnet’s family—on both his mother’s and father’s side—has been growing and making 100% Grand Cru champagne for five generations, with vineyards in Mailly and Verzy, villages that lie to either side of Verzenay, a historic terroir of Maison Mumm and the site of famous Mumm windmill. “Everyone in my family makes wine. Even today, we all have our own plots. There is a passion for champagne, and for terroir, that runs in our genes.”

Fresnet studied in Avize, a well-known Champagne research centre, before obtaining degrees in Biochemistry, Oenology, and Wine Management at the University of Reims. He has devoted his career to champagne and méthode champenoise wines, both in France and internationally, most notably in South Africa and New Zealand. He describes his experiences working in the southern hemisphere as particularly memorable, for the openness of spirit and authenticity of those he encountered, qualities that resonate today in his wine philosophy.

Rigorous, precise, patient and energetic, Fresnet has built a reputation amongst his peers in Champagne for his hands-on approach, his dedication to terroir and his finesse in appreciating the potential of individual wines, qualities which won him two International Wine Challenge ‘Sparkling Wine Maker of the Year’ awards, in 2015 and 2016.

Fresnet joined Maison Mumm in January 2020, following fourteen years with Champagne Henriot, a family-owned house in Reims, which appointed him as its Cellar Master in 2006. While the move signals a new departure in Fresnet’s career, it also marks a return to the terroir of his origins, and to Pinot Noir, for which he has a particular affection. He will bring his exacting standards to a House that has, since its beginnings in 1827, always placed innovation at the service of its wines.

He relishes the prospect of sharing his enthusiasm for Maison Mumm’s wines, which he praises for their elegance, structure and their gastronomic qualities. He comments: “Mumm has everything a House could wish for, in terms of its exceptional terroir, it’s remarkable and storied cuvées and its beguiling possibilities.”

@GHMUMM

PERRIER-JOUËT

In the 'Comet Year' of 1811 and just 12 months after their nuptials, newlyweds Pierre-Nicolas Perrier and Adèle Jouët created a Champagne House through which their love story would continue throughout time. Today, from the same address and using the same buildings & cellars that the couple created, Perrier-Jouët continues to craft enchanting, seductive and delicate Champagnes in the unique floral and elegant style created by the founding couple.

As ever, 2019 was full of sparkling moments for Perrier-Jouët.

The transition of the N.V. cuvées from the standard Champenoise bottle shape to the unique bottle shape inspired by the historic Blason de France range continues with both the N.V. Rosé and Blanc de Blancs now established in trade with just the Grand Brut N.V. to follow. There will be no change to the iconic Belle Epoque bottles.

February saw our annual Valentines dinner held with jewellery partner Atelier Romy with some of the society friends & influencers of both Maisons joining us once again for an evening of sumptuous Perrier-Jouët champagnes and beautiful jewellery created from the Belle Epoque motif – (authors note – check out my cufflinks at the next Champagne Academy event!)

A Perrier-Jouët summer series of indoor and outdoor terraces and spaces were installed across some of London's best venues in The City, Mayfair and St. James' with each having its own look and feel bespoke to the venue yet keeping true to the hugely important Belle Epoque artistic movement ethos of Art Nouveau which was to infuse beauty into everyday life and to make everyday life more beautiful.

We were once again the champagne partner of Masterpiece Art Fair with the Perrier-Jouët terrace there having the most spectacular views of the magnificent Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

The Perrier-Jouët terrace at Masterpiece this year was designed and curated by English designer Bethan Laura Wood whose furniture designs, textiles and terrace centrepiece of her 'HyperNature' sculptural installation delighted the circa 45,000 visitors to the event over its 8 days.

HyperNature takes the shape of a tree whose curves, petals and colours were inspired by her journey to the House in Epernay. Free in form, intense in colour and radiant by its presence, HyperNature is a whimsical champagne experience; a new tasting ritual which enhances the element of fantasy present on the occasions we drink champagne.

As the year was waning, we were delighted to partner with Annabel's in their 1st ever Christmas Fair where a selection of luxury producers from many disciplines were gathered together for 3 days in a magical Christmas environment for a private shopping experience for the members of this astonishing venue.

And finally, right to the last minute of 2019, Perrier-Jouët was the Champagne of the Month for December at the wonderfully decadent Ritz Hotel on Piccadilly. New Year's Eve celebrations there also included a bottle of Belle Epoque 2012 per couple – what a way to see out an old year and welcome a new!

@perrierjouet

PIPER-HEIDSIECK

Mr. Chairman, Academicians and Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen

I'd like to thank Alice Archer for her hard work as Chair in 2019 and welcome Andrew Fullerton to the role. It must be some challenge for the CA team to organise the regional dinners year on year, but both the food and the venues maintain a high level of quality.

2019 saw some changes for Piper-Heidsieck, most notably a change in distribution from William Grant & Sons to Liberty Wines, where Piper joins its illustrious sibling, Charles Heidsieck. Stemming from the same family back around the turn of the 19th century and now owned by the same company, it's nice to have the family back together again!

I was fortunate to taste the 2019 vins clairs with PH chef de caves Emilien Boutillat late last year, and it has to be said, there's real promise in the wines. Whether these concentrated, bright and structured wines make their way into a vintage cuvée or not, time will tell, though I know the winemaking team are very happy. With a changed climate in the appellation, each year brings new challenges and new opportunities.

The Champagne Academy dinners aren't the only occasions when I squeeze into my dinner jacket. Piper-Heidsieck has continued its dazzling ascent in 2019 and I've been called on to collect medals and trophies at IWC, IWSC, CSWWC and DWA awards evenings – a trend look set to continue in 2020. Speaking of the year ahead, Piper-Heidsieck will continue its relationships with The Oscars, Cannes Film Festival and The Australian Open Tennis, but also work with new partners including Secret Cinema in 2020.

On a personal note, I bid you all farewell from my Piper-Heidsieck duties as I will soon move across the fence to Charles Heidsieck, so please give a warm welcome to the new Piper-Heidsieck Ambassador, Armand Briffoteau when you see him.

Come and say hello at the Champagne Academy events!

Simon Stockton
Piper-Heidsieck and Rare Champagne Ambassador
UK and Ireland

POL ROGER

Launches – We launched Pol Roger Brut Vintage from the much-anticipated 2012 Cuvée at the Pol Roger Portfolio tasting - we held an agency-wide tasting for the first time in a decade on 3rd April 2019. Laurent d’Harcourt, President du Directoire, attended the tasting and hosted a masterclass of ‘The Glorious Eights’ looking back at Vintages from 1998 – 2018 Vin Clairs. We also launched Blanc de Blancs 2012, with an intimate lunch for the trade and select press at HIDE restaurant at the end of February.

Blind Wine tastings; we continued with our trilogy of Varsity Blind Wine Tasting matches; Oxford vs Cambs, Edinburgh vs St Andrews and Bath vs Bristol, nurturing the educational aspect of fine wine tasting. The Oxford vs Cambridge match was even filmed and featured on HBO’s “Real Sports” with host Bryant Gumbel raising the question 'is wine tasting a sport?'.

Three Day Eventing; Pol Roger was the Official Champagne of the Festival of British Eventing at Gatcombe Park 2019 and the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials 2019 as well as continuing our support of our Ambassadors Harry Meade and Laura Collett. We erected the ‘Pol Roger Lodge’ at both events, whereby spectators could enjoy a glass of champagne and watch the action on the course. For the first year Champagne Pol Roger sponsored a jump at the Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials.

Bath Rugby – Pol Roger was once again the official champagne of the club for the 2018/19 season and has continued the sponsorship for the 2019/20 season. Each home game, the Man of the Match is awarded a Magnum of Pol Roger Brut Reserve. We also took the Pol Roger Lodge to The Clash, where Bath Rugby hosted rivals Bristol Bears ‘at home’ at Twickenham.

Barbarian RFC - Champagne Pol Roger enjoyed its first full year at the Official Champagne of both the Men’s and Women’s Barbarian FC teams. As part of the sponsorship we supported a mixed men’s and women’s touch rugby tournament.

Real Tennis and Rackets –Pol Roger was the official champagne of all notable amateur and professional tournaments in 2019. We also commissioned celebrated cartoonist Oliver Preston to draw a series of cartoons to use in a ‘Pol Roger Guide to Real Tennis’.

The Photographers’ Gallery – We continued our longstanding relationship, as the Official Champagne of the gallery, providing stock for a number of Private Views, including the Deutsche Borse award, throughout the year.

The Pol Roger Duff Cooper Prize – we support this literary prize as part of our wider support of the arts. This prize celebrates the best in non-fiction writing since 1956. The winner in 2019 was De Gaulle by Julian Jackson.

Music in Country Churches – Pol Roger is the Official Champagne of the MICC, now in its 30th year and was set up as a charitable trust in 1989 with the active support of the Prince of Wales.

Charity – We have a number of longstanding charities that we are proud to support, these include, to name but a few, the Army Benevolent Fund, Cancer Research and The Benevolent, for whom we organised the second annual Touch Rugby Tournament in 2019.

Hugo Palmer Racing – 2019 marked our third year of a three-year sponsorship deal with Hugo Palmer Racing. Palmer started training in Newmarket in 2011 and has swiftly climbed the training ladder to establish himself as one of the leading trainers in the UK. We have renewed our support for 2020.

POMMERY

In 2019 Champagne Pommery launched two new cuvées from the 2004 harvest to accompany Pommery Cuvée Louise 2004. Pommery Cuvée Louise Nature 2004 and Pommery Cuvée Louise Rosé 2004. This was the first time that three different styles of Cuvée Louise have been made available to the UK market, from the same year of harvest. This was a very fitting tribute as Cuvée Louise celebrated the 40th anniversary of its first release in 1979. A series of Lunches and Dinners were held around the globe but notably in Paris, at the Pommery owned restaurant Lucas Carton. Chef de Cave, Clément Pierlot was on hand to talk through each of the cuvées presented to celebrate the anniversary, paired with the Michelin cuisine of Julien Dumas. Limited production from just three Grand Cru villages (Aÿ, Cramant and Avize) from specially selected plots, ensures that quality is exceptional. Both Cuvée Louise Brut Nature 2004 and Cuvée Louise Brut Rosé 2004 received 93pts from the American wine magazine, Wine Spectator.

Pommery Cuvée Louise Nature 2004

Clément Pierlot calls this a 'naked wine' showcasing the purity and clean reflection of the juice with little intervention from the Pommery Chef de Cave. The wine benefits from long-ageing. Great precision, dried citrus zest and white flowers, the wine is very restrained and refined. When paired with rich food, the wine blossoms and behind all its minerality and freshness there is a complex wine with a very long flavour.

Pommery Cuvée Louise Rosé 2004

On the nose a beautiful fragrance of fraise de bois (wild strawberries), raspberries and blackcurrants; this evolves with some spices and gentle floral notes. There is a depth and complexity to this rosé. Working equally well with dessert as with a main dish of lamb. The wine has a texture and richness (restrained) of a wonderful aged rosé and layers of flavours ooze from the glass.

More well-known as an On-Trade brand, Pommery gained new listings in the UK Off-Trade, with listings in Majestic and Waitrose. Packaged in a new gift box, Waitrose took on the award winning Pommery Brut Rosé NV which received a gold medal in the 2019 Decanter World Wine Awards.

Pommery Brut Rosé NV

This rosé is a faithful variation of classic Pommery Brut Royal created by the assemblage of a red wine made with this mind, and different wines vinified in white, with a high proportion of chardonnay. Delicate pale pink with slightly salmon tones and persistent bubbles. On the palate small red berry fruit suggests roundness and softness enhanced by a fine freshness. Very subtle rosé character, supple and finely robust with an appealing freshness and liveliness.

LOUIS ROEDERER

We were delighted to assume the supportive role of Vice Presidential House to Ruinart alongside Vice Presidential house Taittinger in another excellent year for the Champagne Academy.

It was an honour to present the Louis Roederer et Philippe Starck Brut Nature 2009 at the Academy dinners; a cuvée born of a collaboration between Roederer and Starck that was intended to excite as well as challenge the attending champagne lovers to further explore the stylistic variety within the champagne category. The wine is a biodynamic field blend of Pinot Noir, Meunier and Chardonnay from Cumieres. The Maison avoids malolactic fermentation but bottles the champagne at lower pressure to add texture and creaminess to this invigorating champagne.

2019 saw the much anticipated release of the 2012 Louis Roederer and Philippe Starck Brut Nature alongside a brand new cuvée for the Maison, the Brut Nature Rosé 2012. The Rosé is the first vintage expression of a Brut Nature Rosé to be released to the UK market. It is drawn from the same 10 hectare biodynamic vineyard in Cumieres as the white and is also made as a field blend with no malolactic fermentation and bottled at lower pressure. The champagne is ethereal and energising with a crystalline purity lifting the intense peach, pink grapefruit, ginger spice and chalky minerality. It has both power and length, and yet boasts an incredible lightness of touch.

To celebrate the launch, we challenged the students of the Royal Academy of Arts to interpret the champagne through any artistic medium. The art works were as diverse as they were beautiful with students focusing on varying aspects of the champagne, from biodynamics to the flavour and of course Starck's collaborative influence. The winner, chosen by a panel of judges, was announced as Sofia Clausee at the launch in October in the historic Life Drawing Room of the RA. The trophy was presented by Frédéric Rouzaud and Philippe Starck.

2019 also saw the release of Cristal 2012, the 100% biodynamic incarnation of the Maison's luxury cuvée.

Our long-standing relationship with the RA continued with our sponsorship of the Annual Schools Auction and dinner, as well as the opening of key exhibitions and donor events. Our on-going sponsorship of the House & Garden Spirit of Summer and Spirit of Christmas shows continued with sell out masterclasses hosted each day.

It was the 15th year of the Louis Roederer International Wine Writer Awards, hosted in the auditorium of the Royal Academy, with the after party in the stunning Collections Gallery. Guests were served Brut Premier en Magnum.

We continued to work closely with our partners including supporting the launch of the new Breguet Marine Collection, hosting a series of masterclass at Glorious Goodwood in collaboration with Montblanc, and a series of events with Vacheron Constantin. Our champagnes continue to be served as the champagne of choice in these boutiques, along with those of Hermes, Chanel and Yves St Laurent among others.

At the Maison, our dedication and commitment to sustainability continues unabated. We are delighted to report that 90% of waste is now recycled, and that our carbon footprint has been reduced by 25% in the last 10 years.

Louis Roederer continued to be recognised at the Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Champion winning 9 gold medals, while Chef de Cave Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon received a Life Time Achievement Award.

RUINART

Ruinart is the world's first established Champagne House, founded in 1729. It is recognised as a Chardonnay specialist, with this grape harvested from vineyards in the Côte des Blancs and Montagne de Reims, at the heart of all the cuvées. Today, art de vivre, refinement and art define the universe of Ruinart, together with a strength derived from three centuries of history.

As a long-time patron of contemporary art, Ruinart currently supports over 36 art fairs worldwide, and since 2016 have been the official Champagne Partner of Frieze London, Frieze Masters and Frieze New York. Ruinart's commitment to art is not only expressed through its participation in international art fairs, but also through its commissioning of renowned artists since 1896 to present their own unique vision of the Maison. In 2019, the Brazilian artist Vik Muniz was chosen to deliver his vision of the terroir and the savoir-faire that the Maison is rooted in.

Vik Muniz created a series of photographic works inspired by winegrowers and vineyards, who together, face challenging natural conditions each season. Through the use of organic elements such as pieces of blackened wood, charcoal or chardonnay leaves, his photographs highlight our perception of scale and play with our senses. In his 7 artworks for the Maison, Vik Muniz captured the deep relationships between humans and nature, winegrowers and vines, Ruinart and the Champagne terroir; emphasizing the creative tension that transforms adversity into wonder.

Ruinart is also dedicated to supporting the next generation of sommeliers and hosts an annual 'Ruinart Challenge', supporting the most talented sommeliers around the world to enter the international training and mentoring programme. The Ruinart Challenge invites young sommeliers to participate in an annual training day hosted in each market by cellar master Frédéric Panaïotis. In the UK, the event jury was also made up of Ronan Sayburn MS and Tony Lecuroux (2018 UK Ruinart Challenge winner) with the winner attending a four-day educational trip to Champagne.

In July 2019, for the second time, Ruinart opened the doors of its ephemeral one-bedroom hotel, Hotel 1729, in a Notting Hill townhouse. The space was curated by Jonathan Anderson, Creative Director and Founder of JW Anderson and Creative Director of LOEWE, who crafted imaginatively immersive and strikingly designed spaces that juxtaposed and intertwined elements of Ruinart's storied history against a creative modern backdrop.

Finally, in November 2019, Ruinart released a new Dom Ruinart cuvée. The Dom Ruinart Rosé 2007, composed of 80% Chardonnay grand Cru and 20% of Pinot Noir and aged slowly over 10 years.

TAITTINGER

2019 was a very good year for Taittinger. Although the market continues to decline, we're happy to have tracked ahead of the trends and have seen good growth. With a proactive mindset we've been able to welcome all the great opportunities the market constantly offers.

We continue to associate with high-profile bodies in the world of arts and culture: BAFTA, British Independent Film Awards, RADA and Olivier Awards to name a few. We are also proud to continue our partnerships with the prestigious RIBA Stirling Prize and The Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year awards – rapidly making its mark as the leading food photography prize.

Our sailing connections also continue to strengthen with the Royal Solent Regatta, now the second largest regatta in the UK. We were also the Champagne partner for the inaugural King's Cup, where their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge sailed against one another in crews to raise money for their chosen charities.

In the world of fine dining, 'Le Taittinger' culinary prize relaunched this year; the best young chefs of the world come together to compete each year with a different champion ingredient. This year was King Scallops, with the world final taking place at the end of January. We also continue to be the headline sponsor for the UK Sommelier of the Year, attracting the nation's best sommeliers. Our connection with the world of food is also underpinned by our work with Action Against Hunger, assisting in many of their fundraising activities.

The year closed fittingly, as it has for 27 years, at Olympia as the official Champagne at The London Christmas Horse Show. It never gets old watching the nation's finest horses leap over the Taittinger jump.

Looking forward to 2020 there's a lot of exciting activity and change worth raising a glass or two to. Vitalie Taittinger is stepping into her father's shoes as President of Champagne Taittinger. Pierre-Emmanuel stepped down on 31st December having dedicated 45 years to the House. We also launch this year the much-anticipated 2008 vintage of our prestige cuvée, Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs. We are also excited to see further plantings and a harvest at Domaine Evremond, our vineyard in Kent. A big year for Champagne Taittinger, but then isn't every year?!

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The Champagne Academy

The Class of 2019

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Class of 2019
Julie Dupouy Silver Ice Bucket winner

L' Académie Du Champagne

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