



## CUVÉE SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL 2000

ASSEMBLAGE : Pinot Noir & Chardonnay

### SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL AND CHAMPAGNE POL ROGER – A LASTING FRIENDSHIP

The relationship between Champagne Pol Roger and Sir Winston Churchill dates back to a providential meeting at a luncheon given by the British Ambassador to France some months after the liberation of Paris at which was served the sumptuous 1928 vintage of Pol Roger. Attending the lunch was the beautiful Odette Pol-Roger as well as the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, with whom she struck up an instant rapport. A friendship was born which continued until Churchill's death, creating links between the Pol-Roger and Churchill families which are still as strong to this day.

The pressures of his post sadly prevented Churchill ever paying a visit to 44 Avenue de Champagne, the home of Champagne Pol Roger, but he nonetheless proclaimed it "the most drinkable address in the world". As recompense for breaking his promise to visit he sent Odette a copy of his Memoirs inscribed "Cuvée de Réserve, mise en bouteille au Château de Chartwell". He even named one of his racehorses "Pol Roger" and the filly strode to victory at Kempton Park in 1953, Coronation Year.

### THE "CUVÉE SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL"

Champagne Pol Roger created their Prestige Cuvée in homage to Sir Winston Churchill mindful of the qualities that he sought in his champagne: robustness, a full-bodied character and relative maturity.

The exact blend is a closely guarded family secret but it is undeniable that the composition would meet with the approval of the man to whom it is dedicated: "My tastes are simple, I am easily satisfied with the best". Pinot Noir predominates, providing structure, breadth and robustness whilst Chardonnay contributes elegance, finesse and subtlety. Composed exclusively of grapes sourced from Grand Cru Pinot Noir and Chardonnay vineyards which were already under vine during Churchill's lifetime, "Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill" is only made in the very best vintages and is always released later than the other vintage dated Champagnes from Pol Roger, marking Churchill's appreciation for older wines.

### PREVIOUS VINTAGES OF THE CUVÉE

The first "Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill" was from the 1975 vintage and was released, in magnum only in 1984 with the launch taking place at Blenheim Palace. There followed 1979, 1982, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1998 and 1999. The latest vintage, 2000, is the thirteenth and is released only after 11 years cellaring. Produced in very small quantities, it is available in 75cl bottle and magnum.

### THE STORY OF THE VINTAGE

The year of the millenium provided plenty of challenges for the vigneron. A warm midwinter and early spring was interspersed with hailstorms. May was dry, but in July there was severe hail. Thankfully fine weather returned in August and it remained warm and dry to the end of the harvest.

The potential degree was satisfactory, total acidity average to low and pHs fairly high. The tartaric acid content of the must was the lowest since 1970. The clear wines were very good to taste.

### VINIFICATION AND MATURATION

The must undergoes two débourbages (settlings), one at the press house immediately after pressing and the second, a débourbage à froid, takes place in stainless steel tanks at 6°C over a 24 hour period. Fermentation takes place in stainless steel tanks kept to temperatures not exceeding 18°C, with each variety and each village kept separate until final blending. The wine undergoes a full malolactic fermentation. Secondary fermentation takes place in bottle at 9°C in the lowest Pol Roger cellars (33 metres below street level) where the wine is kept until it undergoes remuage (riddling) by hand, a rarity in Champagne nowadays. The very fine and persistent mousse for which Pol Roger is renowned owes much to these deep, cool and damp cellars.





**TASTING NOTES**

The wine displays a mid golden yellow colour and continuous stream of delicate bubbles. An elegant and powerful nose with toasted brioche over fresh quince, peach and apricot with an underlying floral character and high toned cinnamon spice with hints of lime leaf. A balanced palate with weight, power, a velvety texture and a long persistent pure acidity. With weight and complexity characteristic both of the terroir and vintage. A long aftertaste with a light touch of citric acidity bringing together a wine of undeniable majesty. Already drinking well now and will continue to improve over the medium term.

**FOOD PAIRINGS**

The weight, balance and mineral freshness means that this champagne could be served with Parmigiano Reggiano matured for 18 months, a stuffed capon “facon demi-deuil” or sweetbreads cooked with morels.

**TECHNICAL DATA**

Flowering : Chardonnay 11th June  
Pinot Noir 12th June  
Total area under vine : 30 400 hectares (for the AOC region)  
AOC volume : 12 600 kg/ha authorised  
Available : 75cl Bottle  
1.5l Magnum

