CHAMPAGNE

SALON

Le Mesnil

Champagne Salon 2002

AOC Champagne Grand Cru (France) 2002

Salon 2002, the soul of Salon.

PRESENTATION

The fact is, Champagne Salon is unique, born from a unique concept : a single grape variety, chardonnay ; a single terroir, the Côte des Blancs, a single cru village, Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, a single year, its vintage.. just as Aimé Salon had imagined it in the early 1900s. The creative genius behind this exalted champagne, he forged from his idea a masterpiece of balance and dazzing elegance, exploding like fireworks in a riot of gold, the faintest shimmer of green here and there, brilliant and yet so subtle: Champagne Salon. In the 2002 vintage we finally have its true icon.

THE VINTAGE

What a year 2002 turned out to be ! In Champagne, particularly in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, weather conditions were notably unsettled, swinging between cool and warm, rain and dry : but no harsh frosts, no devastating downpours, and almost no hail. As a result the vines could not have been healthier. Pollen measurements at flowering indicated an abundant harvest – possibly too abundant – with bunches gaining weight fast. Would quality be up to scratch? While cautious growers thinned the crop, the issue resolved itself naturally as summer progressed, beautiful warm days concentrating the fruit and restoring perfect balance. The harvest began in mid-September, the 16th in Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, in a cool snap with bright blue skies. The chardonnay grapes, harvested at just the right yields, turned out to be rich and powerful, every grape a reflection of its conditions. Add to this the human element – supreme effort, artistry, love – and the result is a wine of refinement, precision, balance; glinting, captivating like a samurai sword. For the image of battle could not be more apposite given the audacity and power, serene tension and selfassurance present in this 2002 vintage, here for us now to savour. Not just the soul of Salon, but its triumph.

GRAPES

Chardonnay : 100%

SERVICE

Taste it and drink it just cool, between 13 and 15 degrees. Be ravished.

TASTING

It is pale gold in hue with hints of green. The nose is complex - orange flowers with the merest hint of honey-dew, candied citrus notes, madeleine buns warm from the oven. The palate is inordinately fine, long and straight as an arrow, bridling with energy yet restrained and precisely poised. Like the blade of a samurai sword as it slices clean through a stem, the flower soaring high, then falling softly through the air. Salon 2002 is a great romantic, but also armed for battle! Its strength and audacity give it the balance of a classical dancer.

FOOD PAIRINGS

Timeless classic dishes are the way to go for this creamy, suggestive champagne, this quintessence of Champagne Salon. Simple yet refined dishes such as lobster bisque, a Bresse chicken in cream, scallop carpaccio, truffle risotto, veal baked with morilles mushrooms, seabass in a salt crust. Or plainer still : caviar from Aquitaine, a few translucent slices of Bottarga, a whole Parma ham or an Iberico, a handful of golden

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shards from the heart of an old parmesan or cave-aged cheddar.

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