

Académie du Champagne



Session 2020

Académie du Champagne

36, PLACE DU FORUM

Reims

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL HOUSE TAITTINGER

Mr. Chairman,

Academicians and Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen

When Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger wrote the opening report back in 2004, our last turn as Champagne Academy Presidential House, the great decision of the day was introducing a blind tasting on the final day of the academy week so as to balance the skills of memory against technical skill, today we face a different world indeed.

2020 was a year unlike no other and for the first time in the Academy's history Champagne Taittinger will roll the Presidency on through 2021 and into 2022, until we can successfully bring all the elements of the Academy Week to the chosen 16 candidates as per usual. Academy Lite is not an option. We do this with the full support of all the other 15 houses and in particular our vice-Presidential houses of Champagne Ruinart & Champagne Bollinger.

Our Chairman, Andrew Fullerton, & his dynamic committee have embarked upon a series of new activations within the Academy itself to raise its profile among the UK trade and to ensure we emerge from the current situation as a fitter & more agile organisation better placed to serve its primary function of supporting the awareness and stature of the 16 Grandes Marques represented.

Much has been achieved for Charity over the period and we recently had great pleasure in donating a cheque to The Drinks Trust of £16,000 from magnum raffles and other support from all the houses.

The 16 candidates from 2020 are still chomping at the bit to embark upon the life changing adventure and of course we cannot wait to welcome them to Champagne and our family homes. We hope to see you all very soon at one of the magnificent Champagne Academy Dinners as soon as possible, where we can once again enjoy the delights of our finest Champagnes with friends both old & new.

Until then our warmest regards & best wishes

The Taittinger Family



*Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger
Champagne Taittinger*



*Vitalie Taittinger – President,
Champagne Taittinger*



*Clovis Taittinger –
General Manager,
Champagne Taittinger*

2020 HARVEST REPORT

Vintage 2020 was rather exceptional in that it was so early. At Taittinger we finished picking in the Côte des Bar on 31st August, which has never happened before in the history of the House.

In fact, from the beginning of the wine growing year the vines were 15 days ahead of the rest of the decade – and it has been an early decade too. Everyone came back from their holidays early so that we could hit the ground running after 15th August. We opened our press at Loches-sur-Ource on 20th August and our presses at Pierry and Rilly-la-Montagne on 24th August.

The teams from our ripening observation network took almost 750 samples throughout the entire vineyard this year, to make sure we could optimise our picking circuits and maintain our aims in terms of quality. At the start of the harvest, we feared that there would be a surge in temperatures and harvest operations would be compounded by too much heat but our concerns faded away with the return of the cooler nights and the decreasing risk of storms.

We have every reason to be delighted with the quality of this harvest. The fruit was very healthy with no botrytis. Harvest started with the black grape varieties, which ripened a lot earlier. Patience was required with the Chardonnay so that we could achieve what we wanted in terms of alcohol and grape maturity.

The last week of harvesting was the climax of Chardonnay picking, especially in plots producing grapes for our Comtes de Champagne and plots for our cuvée Les Folies de la Marquetterie.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020



Chairman – Andrew Fullerton

We have had a very strange year indeed and instead of speaking about all our fantastic events and the magnificent course I will instead have to bore you with the administrative tasks we have all worked on this year. We are enormously proud however of our fundraising efforts for our charity partner The Drinks Trust.

I'm sure that when Taittinger, this year's Presidential House (and Kevin McKee in particular) took on their role they didn't expect to be so busy in a year of a lockdown and have to speak to me so much. They, along with all the shippers have been a huge support in this hugely different year, Thank you!

This year we began with our last AGM when we had a fantastic Vintage tasting in Vintners Hall when the effects of Covid and how it would affect our Trade was still relatively unknown. At this event little did we know how relevant our choice of Charity Partner would be! Through our fundraising activities we managed to raise £11,052.00 which is the most we have ever raised. This was only possible through the hard work of the Committee, the support of our Houses and Shippers and of course our Academicians who supported every single raffle we did, Thank you all! Even better news for the Drinks Trust is that when the Houses in France heard how much we had raised they increased our efforts to £16,000 (representing an equal amount from the 16 Houses). Thank you once again!

This year the Committee have gone above and beyond with everything asked of them and their support to both the Academy and me has been incredible. We have done a huge amount in a truly short time and hopefully this will lay the basis for a stronger and more relevant Academy going forward. We have redesigned our website, social media and initiated a digital platform to keep our Academicians up to date with what is happening in Champagne. Our Newsletter was another new initiative which we have found an invaluable way to engage our members and shippers alike. These initiatives will grow and strengthen as we go forward and are now our key methods of communication for the Academy.

Our Course unfortunately did not happen in 2020 but with the support of the Houses we had decided to roll over everything into 2021 so Taittinger would have remained as the Presidential House and I would continue as Chairman (sorry!). Unfortunately, we have now had to cancel the Course for 2021, but our candidates will be supported and if due to Covid they must change role or get made redundant they will still be allowed to attend the course in 2022. Every candidate has been in constant contact with us throughout this year and they will all be a great addition to our membership.

This year we aim to continue our event calendar (found on our website) albeit with different timings to normal. Our Vintage tasting will become a Halo event in our calendar in an incredibly special location and with hopefully some further activity around it. Unfortunately, we will not be holding a London Dinner but we will hold two dinners, the Midlands and the Scottish.

We have a lot still to do in 2021 to continue to develop our communication, educational resources and engagement plans and we will continue to update you via our website and newsletter. We will continue our support of The Drinks Trust as our chosen charity and our partnership with Riedel who have also supported us this year through some educational work and promotional support.

We aim to engage these partners along with some further guests to begin a Masterclass programme for our members at certain events to regain our position within Champagne Education in the UK & Ireland. Further information will be forwarded when dates and speakers are confirmed.



*Kevin McKee – UK Director,
Champagne Taittinger*

I would like to give a huge thanks to everyone on the Committee as they really have supported me through this year and worked towards our shared vision of reaffirming our position within the Champagne world. Every single member has given their time and expertise to help make the Academy relevant in this vastly different landscape and I look forward to working with them this year. I would like to thank Martin Dibben who has decided to pass the Treasurer baton to Philip Amps. Martin is thankfully staying on in the Committee as support for Philip and to also help with some further changes we will be making in the coming year.

I would also like to single out Paul Walker who has been a huge help this year and has probably had more to do than any other Vice Chair in our past. We decided that we would work towards a shared vision and he has been a massive support to everyone on the Committee and has led the development of our digital redesign. My thanks to Val who has taken on this year's challenge with gusto and we appreciate her support as we know it has been very different than what has come before. All members deserve a personal thank you which I will do in person and hopefully when our events begin again you will all be aware of what they have dedicated to the future of our Academy.

We would love for all our members to have a say in the future of the Academy, to support our work going forward and to contribute where possible to the website and newsletter.

I look forward to seeing you all in the near future and I hope you and your families stay safe!

Andrew Fullerton



Val Simpson, Paul Walker, Nick Bromhead and Andrew Fullerton



Paul Walker and Val Simpson



Nick Bromhead and Rachel Debenham of Taittinger



Ross Carter, CEO the Drinks Trust with Andrew Fullerton



Committee from left to right: Rob, Craig, Alice, Paul, Andrew, Marcus, Nick, Charlotte, Martin and Philip



BOLLINGER

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

2020 was an abnormal year for us all which, although it posed many challenges, also inspired new innovations and ways of communicating with customers and consumers alike. Champagne Bollinger conducted their first ever virtual launch of a new product, learned to navigate the pros and cons of hosting masterclasses remotely and developed new ways of talking to the end consumer through strategic digital and media campaigns.

Bollinger were lucky enough to launch the 2012 vintage of La Grande Année and La Grande Année Rosé before the national lockdown. The event was hosted at St JOHN Restaurant with a bespoke pairing menu: La Grande Année 2012 was served alongside platters of freshly poached Dorset Langoustines, mayonnaise and crusty bread; La Grande Année Rosé 2012 with Guinea Fowl pie served with mashed potatoes and greens and; for dessert, Bollinger's non-vintage Rosé en magnum worked wonders with Rhubarb tart.

Going virtual did not put a stop to Bollinger's events and partnerships. Bollinger joined the Hay Festival Wales for their first ever virtual event, which included 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 Matthew Dooley for his graphic novel, Flake, the first graphic novel to win the prize in its 20 year history. Judges were 'captivated' by Dooley's work and were charmed by his delightful wordplay, striking images and laugh out loud moments. Dooley joins 20 previous winners including Nina Stibbe, Helen Fielding, Hannah Rothschild, Howard Jacobson, Terry Pratchett and Will Self to name but a few.

The launch of the PNVZ 15 marked the release of the first in a limited edition series, with each cuvée showcasing a different Cru and highlighting its unique taste. Bollinger collaborated with Michelin Starred Chefs Philippe Mille and Jean Sulpice, who created exquisite food pairings made using locally sourced ingredients to mirror the wine's terroir driven style. The partnership was communicated digitally, making use of beautifully curated videos and images designed to convey the artistry and craftsmanship that goes into making a Bollinger Champagne.

Bollinger continues to be the Official Champagne of English Rugby and, although the Six Nations was cut short last year, we were delighted that all the scheduled games at Twickenham were able to take place. Autumn Internationals were played behind closed doors, except for a very important game, England V France, where a reduced number of spectators were permitted. We are extremely proud of the whole England squad and their performance in what was an extremely challenging year. We look forward to cheering them on again in person soon.

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 revisited 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 also released a limited edition dedicated to the 25th Bond instalment. Created entirely from Pinot Noir from the Grand Cru village of Aÿ this was 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.

After several delays, anticipation for No Time To Die is greater than ever. The film is set for release in September 2021.

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 2020 this popularity culminated in CH being voted 2nd most admired Champagne brand!

2020 was, of course, dominated by the global pandemic along with the closure of restaurants and staff being put on furlough. As a region, Champagne has always dealt with huge challenges in its stride; wars, phylloxera, temperance, the great depression, and it was this spirit of the Champenois that stood them in good stead for a year like no other. With reduced staff on the ground, we saw our MD, Stephen Leroux, working in the vineyards and some of our ambassador team labelling bottles in the winery. All hands to the pumps, as they say.

In the vineyards, 2020 was a warm, dry summer with berries from all three varieties entering the press in rude health. Harvest officially began on 17th August, the earliest in Champagne's history. The third of three successive vintages bearing wonderful fruit, will Charles Heidsieck (or any of our peers) release a trilogy of 2018, 2019 and 2020 vintages? Will we see another 1998, 1999 and 1990?

Despite the inability of groups to meet up physically, the CH team embraced technology and launched several new cuvées over Zoom. CH 2012 Millesime was the first to surface during lockdown 1.0; a luminous wine to follow in the footsteps of its earnest older sibling, the 2008. Cellarmaster, Cyril Brun, also released the hotly anticipated Blanc des Millenaires 2006 in 2020; just the sixth iteration of this iconic Prestige Cuvée and one that captivates on first sip. Finally, our release of Collection Crayeres wines in late 2020 included a vertical tasting of CH Brut Reserve NV (Mis en Cave) going back to 1986 base, hosted simultaneously across the globe by Cyril and CH Managing Director, Stephen Leroux. A true testament to the ageworthiness of Charles' non-vintage champagnes.

Physical events were notable for their absence last year, however the Concours of Elegance car show at Hampton Court Palace went ahead in late summer; something to enjoy in the fading sunshine. Visitors enjoyed CH masterclasses and pop-up tastings in between seeing some of the world's rarest cars up close and personal. Some people even got to meet their idols! HRH Prince Michael of Kent finally got to meet our Brand Manager, Willem Pincon, while model David Gandy booked onto a Charles Heidsieck tasting so he could meet me.

I really missed the Champagne Academy Events in 2020 but made up for this by drinking champagne and eating too much during lockdown. The CH team looks forward to seeing you all in 2021 as circumstances allow!

Very best
Simon, Willem, Mackenzie and all at the Maison

VEUVE CLICQUOT

Known by her peers as “La Grande Dame de la Champagne,” Madame Clicquot demonstrated her innovative spirit in 1810 by producing the first vintage wine of the Champagne region. With her daring, avant-garde ideals, she 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. Madame Clicquot also used the red wines from her Bouzy vineyards in 1818 to produce the very first Rosé blend in Champagne.

The Bold Woman Award by Veuve Clicquot is a modern evolution of the Business Woman Award which has been running since 1972; the first and longest-running international accolade for female leaders and figureheads. It 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.

On the 8th March 2021, International Women’s Day, the finalists of the Bold Woman Award and Bold Future Award were announced. The Bold Woman Award celebrates female leadership, honouring inspirational women with an established track record of organisational and personal success. The finalists selected by the panel of judges are Maria Raga, CEO of fashion resale app Depop, Prof. Sarah Gilbert, University of Oxford Professor of Vaccinology and co-founder of Vaccitech and Dame Donna Kinnair, Chief Executive and General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing.

The Bold Future Award celebrates female entrepreneurship and up and coming leaders of the future. The finalists selected by the panel of judges are: Sharmadean Reid MBE, Founder of Beautystack, Ebinehita Iyere, Founder of Milk Honey Bees and Theadora Alexander, Co-Founder of Young Foodies Group.

At the end of last year, Veuve Clicquot and iconic Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama sent the world a cheerful message by revealing a unique and colourful creation that celebrates the House’s new vintage, La Grande Dame 2012. The original creation is Yayoi Kusama’s vibrant tribute to La Grande Dame of Champagne, Madame Clicquot. Yayoi Kusama has designed the La Grande Dame 2012 case and bottle and has applied her signature polka dots pattern as champagne bubbles that embody La Grande 2012.

Yayoi Kusama has also designed 100 unique, numbered and original creations that symbolise vital energy, love and celebration of life in the form of an opulent flower piece.

Despite being separated by 150 years and thousands of miles between their homelands, Madame Clicquot and Yayoi Kusama share incredible similarities between their lives. Both women went on to counter that strictness throughout their lives, maintaining one goal: to gain independence and conquer the world.

This remarkable collaboration launched in November 2020 in the UK alongside France, USA and Japan.

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: @VeuveClicquot
- Website: www.veuve-cliquot.com

HEIDSIECK & CO. MONOPOLE

Like many Houses despite an excellent start to 2020, the year was not without its challenges. But with UK residents in lockdown and taking to drinking at home, Heidsieck & Co. Monopole enjoyed excellent sales growth due to a number of new Off Trade distribution listings. Gifting became a more prominent part of the sales mix too. Missed celebrations and anniversaries meant that online sales grew exponentially.

Harvest 2020

After 2018 and 2019, 2020 looks set to be another excellent vintage. Of course it will depend how the wines evolve but there is good reason to be optimistic. The year was hot and dry with few of the climatic calamities of hail and frost. Yields were in-line with many House's estimates with fewer bunches but larger ones which made picking considerably easier. The yield was limited to 8,000kg per hectare equivalent to 230 million bottles for the region. The lower yield, set by Comité Champagne was more in response to the global reduction in demand rather than any shortfall in supply. Harvest officially began on the 17th August, a fortnight before usual start dates with the first press of 2020 at Tours sur Marne started on August 22nd.

Alternative Cuvée – new for 2020

Heidsieck & Co. Monopole 'Gold Top' 2011

'Gold Top' is shorthand for luxury-quality bubbles – at a fraction of the price. This wine was aged for almost a decade before its release in 2020. This lengthy ageing process means the toasty, creamy, rich flavours we love so much are dialled right up. Lemony, perfumed, with a really lush texture – the flavours linger with you for ages.

Assemblage: Chardonnay and Pinot Noir

On the Eye: Golden yellow, with brilliant reflections

On the Nose: The initial impression on the nose is of an aged, open wine with layers of complexity. It has tertiary aromas of toast and vanilla. It gives the impression of being a generous, truly characterful champagne with notes of smoke and brioche

On the Palate: It feels voluptuous in the mouth. Full and generous. Initial flavours are of mocha and candied fruits, pear and green-apple, then gradually, woody notes and hints of dried fruit, sourdough and hazelnuts begin to emerge. This wine develops very nicely. It is long lasting on the palate. Delightfully fresh and lively yet still has a smooth and creamy finish.

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 Julie Cavil 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 May 2020 Krug Champagne continued with the Edition story, revealing Krug Grande Cuvée 168th Edition, albeit digitally rather than physically with our many Krug lovers – we shared this story with press, trade & consumers via Krug Connect, a digital platform launched in early 2020 allowing the Krug wine making team to connect live and remotely from the Krug family house in Champagne. Krug Grande Cuvée 168th Edition was received exceptionally well, leading to Jancis Robinson publishing her highest ever score of 19/20 –

“This is going to be a really great, glamorous Grande Cuvée... The length on the palate is remarkable. This is magnificently precise.”

Jancis Robinson, Krug Grande Cuvée 168th Edition – 19/20 points

@krugchampagne

LANSON

The House of Lanson celebrated 260 years of producing and sharing our beautifully aged wines with the world in 2020.

In the United Kingdom and under the new leadership of Robert Rand, our new brand platform was launched. This included refreshed label designs on the front of all bottles, back labels with pioneering transparency of the blends, a new global advertising creative and two new cuvées; Lanson Le Black Réserve and Lanson le Blanc de Blancs. Lanson Le Blanc de Blancs was created by Hervé Dantan - Chef de Caves, upon his arrival in 2013 to reflect the freshness of the Lanson style through the finesse and depth of Chardonnay. Lanson Le Black Réserve, also created by Hervé, offers a Lanson non-vintage Brut with at least 5 years of aging on the lees, combining freshness, complexity and fullness in order to seduce wine and gastronomy connoisseurs. Both cuvées were launched over Christmas 2020 with exclusive partnerships with Selfridges and Grosvenor House and will be featured at the 134th Championships, Wimbledon this summer.

Lanson continues its commitment to global sustainability championing and supporting the Viticulture Durable en Champagne (VDC) sustainability certification scheme and is delighted to welcome Mélody Stroh as Vineyards and Sustainable Development Manager. Mélody is responsible for our vineyards and supports our vigneron partners to achieve their High Environmental Value Certification.

Sadly with the restrictions of the pandemic, all of our great global events laid dormant in 2020. With international travel restrictions, it leaves the wonderful refurbishment of our cellars yet to be discovered by many. A journey of exploration from vine to flute, the tour showcases the significant investment into the modernisation of our wine making facilities, whilst discovering Clos Lanson (our walled, 1 hectare of Chardonnay, vineyard) through our maze of extensive cellars, which are home to a unique collection of vintages dating back to 1904.

We are looking forward to the opportunities 2021 brings, supporting our customers, especially in hospitality and bringing our events to life once again.

For more information visit www.lanson.com or follow us on our social media channels at

Global: @champagnelanson

UK: @champagnelansonuk

LAURENT-PERRIER

Though founded in 1812 and with over 200 years of history to draw upon, it is fair to say 2020 was unlike any other previous year. The closure of and continuing uncertainty, surrounding the re-opening of the hospitality sector meant flexibility and adaptability were key. Essentially, for Laurent-Perrier UK this meant focussing on our retail channels for sales and social media to engage with consumers.

When able to, stylish outdoor terraces were created with the likes of The Berkeley and Sea Containers in London and The Devonshire Arms at Bolton Abbey. In addition, when possible we rolled out our retro Citroen H van 'Rosie' to dispense much needed champagne. As lockdown returned we embraced the notion of 'dine at home' pairing our champagnes with some very inspiring menus.

These were amplified via our social media channels and despite being deprived of our usual events; we were able to engage with consumers around Christmas, New Year, Valentine's and Mother's Days. Picking up the prestigious World Champion Classic Vintage Brut Champagne for Laurent-Perrier 2008 Brut Millésimé (150cl) at the Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships was also cause for celebration.

Laurent-Perrier prides itself on being a family company and was delighted to welcome Lucie Pereyre, the granddaughter of Bernard de Nonancourt the founder of modern day Laurent-Perrier, to the company as the representative for Grand Siècle.

As lockdown loomed in December, it sparked Laurent-Perrier UK into action completing a virtual journey from Marlow to the cellars in Tours-sur-Marne and back (twice) to raise much-needed funds for our Royal Warrant grantor's charity The Prince's Trust.

MOËT & CHANDON

An unexpected year for all, 2020 brought many new and exciting opportunities on Moët & Chandon.

While restrictions meant many events had to take place behind closed doors – including those of key partners, Royal Ascot and Henley Royal Regatta – Moët & Chandon decided to bring the magic of champagne directly to our consumers, creating luxury bespoke hampers for each event, delivered straight to the front door of those wishing to recreate the experience in their own home.

For over 275 years, Moët & Chandon has been a champagne of choice for commemorating both intimate moments and the grandest of events, thanks to the House's recognized generosity in the art of celebration, known as its "savoir-fête." Since 1891, when the House's first personalized champagne labels were customized with the name of a prestigious Parisian café, Moët & Chandon has offered consumers the possibility to make their champagne experience both exclusive and personal.

In September Moët & Chandon launched a new Limited Edition for gift-givers who wished to express a deeply meaningful message, especially in a year when we could not all be together and many were sending message of love from afar. The "Specially Yours" gift tin made it possible for a name or short message to be inscribed on and were launched exclusively at 'London Calling'; a Champagne bar and concept space in Selfridges, Oxford Street.

Celebrating London's iconic place in the hearts of Londoners and international cultural scene alike, 'London Calling' featured a designed space inspired by one of London's most revered expressions – the classic red telephone box – in which was housed a celebratory Champagne bar, a curated photographic exhibition of celebratory London moments from 1908 to the 1990s and the limited edition personalised gift box service.

In October London Cocktail Week became London Cocktail Month, and we celebrated the occasion with all 250 bars taking part kicking off the festival with a 17:43 generosity toast with Moët & Chandon Imperial in magnum.

To close out the year, Moët & Chandon teamed up with comedian Katherine Ryan on a new festive digital campaign. The light-hearted online series saw Katherine shed light on the much-debated pronunciation of the Champagne brand.

The campaign, entitled Gifting Mo-Wet, followed Katherine as she drove around London in a eco-milk float, delivering bottles of Champagne as Christmas gifts to her friends; model and photographer Laura Bailey, dancer Eric Underwood, author Jack Guinness, body activist Jada Sezer and members of London Community Gospel Choir. To support those working behind the camera in the UK film, TV and cinema industry in a difficult year, Moët & Chandon also made a donation to the Film & TV Charity.

We look forward to another year of excitement and success in 2021, join us online to stay up-to-date with all of the brand's latest news and events:

- Facebook: @Moet&ChandonUK
- Twitter: @Moet_UK
- Instagram: @MoetChandon
- Website: www.moet.com

G H MUMM & PERRIER-JOUËT

What a year 2020 turned out to be.

Who would ever of thought that the expression 'you're on mute' would become a staple of British conversation?

Here in the UK, Champagne Mumm has an off-trade focus so whilst we were all locked down, missing the on-trade, family and friends as we all saw, the British supermarkets were never busier and in defiance of all other previous trends in difficult and uncertain times, the public seemed to re-ignite their love of the Grande Marque houses – I do hope the same trend was seen by all other member houses of the Academy – Every cloud.....?

Perrier-Jouët on the other hand is much more on-trade led which of course proved even more challenging. However, with a pivot or 2 we flexed our floral muscles and squeezed in a few traditional events in the form of dinners, consumer masterclasses, afternoon tea partnerships, trade training etc. in the spaces before and between the lockdowns but the majority of our time and energy moved to on-line and press/influencer activity which was a steep learning curve.

Across the year Perrier-Jouët partnered with different prestige operators from different industries all connected by their customers love and interest in champagne including;

- o A Bastille day promotion with a French 'smellies' company
- o Home DIY food kits with paired Perrier-Jouët cuvées
- o On-line masterclasses for VIP clients of a luxury fashion brand & other partners
- o Product placement into lifestyle press & influencers
- o Seasonal handmade picnic deliveries – a Perrier-Jouët picnic on the Axminister anyone?

At the close of the year, with only one 'class' cancelled by the urgent December lockdown, we were particularly delighted to co-host a series of Champagne tasting and Christmas wreath making evening events with our friends at McQueen's florists at their Mayfair store as the much needed warmth, energy and Christmas spirit was felt by all who attended.

All of us at Champagnes G.H. Mumm & Perrier-Jouët hope everyone is well & safe and sincerely look forward to sharing a glass with you as and when we are able.

@GHMUMM @PERRIERJOUËT

PIPER-HEIDSIECK

After the change of distribution from William Grant & Sons to Liberty Wines in early 2019, Piper-Heidsieck had to adapt this year to face the global COVID-19 pandemic.

More than ever this year, Piper-Heidsieck and its Head-Winemaker, Emilien Boutillat, renewed their engagement to lead the change to a more sustainable winemaking in Champagne. The House, already double certified VDC (Viticulture Durable en Champagne) and HVE (Haute Valeur Environnementale), increased their investments to support all their winegrower partners to reach the target of 100% of them being certified VDC by 2023.

Moreover, Piper-Heidsieck has also renewed this year their support toward the Reims-based start-up 'Vitibot' and started to use in their vineyard the 'Bakus' solar-powered robot, which straddles rows and confines spraying by the use of recuperative panels. This robot provides effective and concrete responses to the sustainability calls of the House, but also increases the safety of operators while protecting the vineyard and biodiversity.

In May 2020, Emilien Boutillat hosted a digital masterclass for UK sommeliers where he explained in detail all the directions being taken to make PH winemaking as sustainable as possible.

As most of the world was locking down in 2020, Piper-Heidsieck commemorated the 100th anniversary of the beginning of Prohibition with a Piper-Heidsieck Cuvée Brut Prohibition Limited Edition. This bottle commemorates the popularity of Piper-Heidsieck during 'bootlegging' in the USA. The unique bottle was launched in preview as the official champagne of the Oscars ceremony in February and was available in UK retail during summer. The Limited Edition displayed an off-white label inspired by a 1920s bottle found in Piper-Heidsieck archives, and a QR code printed on the gift box gave access to a video showing the tumultuous journey of a bottle of Piper-Heidsieck from Reims to the speakeasies of New York and Chicago.

Piper-Heidsieck has continued its dazzling ascent in 2020 and collected gold medals and trophies at IWC, IWSC, CSWWC, The Drink Business Masters, Decanter World Wine Awards. Piper-Heidsieck has also been awarded "Best Champagne House of the World 2021" by the Best Wine of the World Competition at the end of 2020.

On behalf of Piper-Heidsieck, Armand Briffoteau, Piper-Heidsieck Brand Ambassador, and myself are looking forward to meeting you all again in person at the Champagne Academy events in the coming months.

Nicolas Marzolf
Piper-Heidsieck and Rare Champagne Brand Manager
UK and Ireland

POL ROGER

Launches – The final hurrah before lockdown descended was the launch of Pol Roger Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill 2009 at contemporary art gallery, Unit London. We partnered with Oystermen whose oysters paired perfectly with the champagne. We launched our Brut Vintage 13 in October, this time virtually, and worked with celebrated restaurateur Andrew Edmunds who designed complementary hampers for all attendees.

Virtual Tastings – We launched a series of virtual consumer tastings during the first lockdown. In the first our MD, James Simpson MW, interviewed Hubert de Billy, 5th generation Pol Roger family member, about being part of the family, winemaking and conducted a tasting of the Brut Reserve.

Pop Ups – In the wake of lockdown easing in July 2020, we took to the road and did a series of pop-ups with a number of our on and off trade accounts. We took our Land Rover Defender, 'Polly', parasols, deck chairs and lots of chilled champagne to restore the spirits of the masses.

Advertising – We worked with Plus advertising agency to create two new Champagne Pol Roger adverts, one for spring/ summer and another for autumn/ winter. The adverts celebrated the post lockdown spirit of making the most of even small occasions, with the tagline 'Delight in Every Moment'.

Outlook for 2021

Bastien Collard Joins Pol Roger & Cie – Bastien Collard de Billy is now the first of the sixth generation to join the family business.

Launch of Cuvée Sir Winston Churchill 2012 – We launched the 19th vintage of our prestige cuvée virtually on 9th March. We partnered with fellow Royal Warrant Holder, Paxton & Whitfield, Churchill's preferred cheesemonger, and attendees were sent a selection of Churchill's favourite cheeses.

Launch of Blanc de Blancs 2013 – We are looking forward to launching our Blanc de Blancs 2013, exclusively made from Chardonnays selected from the Grands Crus of the Côte des Blancs.

Champagne Pol Roger Harvest 2020

It is a huge relief that, in spite of the uncertainty due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this new harvest was a success. The musts tasted during this harvest are promising, well-balanced and characterized by an aromatic freshness. We eagerly anticipate tasting the wine in a few years' time...

POMMERY

2020 was not without its challenges! However, there was still some good news. The viticulture cycle continued despite the global pandemic and the signs are that the 2020 vintage will be one of exceptional quality.

Outlook for 2021

Pommery revealed that it had begun the conversion to organic viticulture from the 2020 harvest onwards. This conversion involves 175 hectares of the 285 hectares managed by the Champagne House. The conversion, with a minimum duration of three years, will be progressive to adapt the vineyards and the structure of the demanding viticulture. The decision has been carefully considered by the Vranken-Pommery group and is the culmination of many years of large-scale experimentation encompassing all of their vineyards. According to Clément Pierlot, Champagne Pommery's 10th cellar master "The conversion to organic viticulture was a natural evolution given Vranken Pommery's commitment to the environment for the past 20 years. It reflects the President's philosophy and is a new step forward to a 100% sustainable viticulture. Our team is very focused on this new project. We are proud to be a part of the family owned group Vranken-Pommery Monopole and to play a role towards a better future" (From the Wine Industry Network, New York Dec 2020).

Vranken-Pommery Monopole will begin converting its vineyards in Champagne to organic viticulture. As part of the conversion, Pommery will use no synthetic fertilisers, herbicides, insecticides or fungicides on its vines – a decision that follows years of organic trials and experiments. "All our vineyards in Camargue and in Provence will be certified as organic at the 2023 harvest," said Vranken-Pommery's President, Paul-Francois Vranken. "Values and a vision are nothing unless they are an integral part of an organisation and its executive management. By favouring renewable energy, by controlling the impact of our activities on the environment, by choosing the most efficient production techniques for glass, labels and packaging". This pledge was signed in 2003 and nearly two decades later Pommery is still at the forefront of sustainable development.

Alternative Cuvée – new for 2020

Pommery Apanage Blanc de Noirs NV The blend is 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Meunier and spent 4 years in the cellars before release. The dosage is 7g/ltr

The idea behind Pommery Apanage Blanc de Noirs NV was to continue in the footsteps of Pommery Apanage Blanc de Blancs NV which was released in 2019. Chef de Cave Clément Pierlot commented "In contrast to the structure of the Blanc de Blancs NV, our Blanc de Noirs NV is fresh, delicate and ethereal, rounding off the Pommery Apanage range perfectly."

What Clément means here, is that our Blanc de Blancs NV has a different style to the usual Blanc de Blancs NV on the market. Through the provenance of its grapes, it is slightly "rounder and more structured" and Clément wanted to follow the exact same "disruptive or unusual" path with the Blanc de Noirs NV, which is much "fresher and delicate" than usual Blanc de Noirs NV.

On the Eye: Pale gold with pearlescent and slightly amber reflections as signs of delicacy and maturity. Exceptional brilliance. Very fine effervescence.

On the Nose: Remarkable elegance. The first nose reveals subtle and floral notes of acacia and peony rapidly enveloped by sugary sensations of mirabelle, crushed strawberry and frangipani. Nuances of vanilla and soft spices complete the sophisticated aromatic range of this wine.

On the Palate: The attack is pure with very elegant creamy notes. The floral notes revealed on the nose are found on the back of the palate and result in flavours of acacia honey. The heart of the tasting is intense, ample and full-bodied. Nuances of pear, red fruits and spices reminiscent of Timur berries. The mineral texture reflects the exceptional terroirs which make up this blend. The perfect balance of the finish is underlined by a delicate note of blood orange.

LOUIS ROEDERER

2020 was a year that no one could have predicted; a global pandemic, closed borders, lockdown and the enforced closure of the hospitality industry. If ever there was an example of a black swan event, this was surely it. However, despite the challenges and the uncertainty there have been some unexpected highlights.

The first silver lining came when the itinerant labour usually relied upon to bolster the permanent vineyard team were unable to travel to France to carry out the crucial vineyard work in spring and summer. Facing a lack of manpower, which could have had a serious impact on the quality of this and future harvests, the office teams volunteered to swap their lap tops for wellies and work in the vineyards. Alexis Deligny, UK export manager was one of the volunteers, 'The atmosphere is one of genuine camaraderie, with a real philosophy of team spirit and happiness to help our colleagues. It is very interesting for us to see how our colleagues really work in the vineyards and to be part of it. We all realized how difficult it is and honestly it makes all of us very humble and filled with admiration'. As a result a superb quality 2020 harvest was bought in without a hitch.

2020 was to be the final Louis Roederer International Wine Writer Awards, and the annual award ceremony was to be the culmination of 16 years of recognising and rewarding excellence in wine communication around the world. Sadly social distancing put pay to any form of live event, however, the virtual award ceremony had the benefit of reaching a far greater audience, shining a broader light on the achievements of so many talented writers and photographers. The ceremony ended with the Lifetime Achievement Award going to Neil Beckett, the explosive and heart-warming reaction to this announcement on twitter proved him to be a popular and worthy winner.

It was at this juncture that Champagne Louis Roederer were delighted to announce a collaboration with JancisRobinson.com and bamewineprofessionals.co.uk with the inaugural Louis Roederer BAME Bursary. The winner was to receive a year long mentorship with Jancis, and a £2000 travel or educational bursary from Louis Roederer. We were very pleased to announce the winner as Aleesha Hansel.

Like many, we continued working with our key partners hosting virtual events, as well as a series of winemaker masterclasses and staff training for furloughed sommeliers.

Late autumn saw the release of the exceptional and very limited Cristal Vinothèque 1999, a project exploring the concept of 'eternal youth' born of a desire to enable consumers to enjoy aged Cristal.

Despite the pandemic, the Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships 2020 were able to proceed. The results were a fitting tribute to the hard work and commitment of the Louis Roederer team in their quest to work hand in hand with nature to produce exceptional champagne reflecting their unique terroir. Louis Roederer won a total of 11 gold medals, they won the Supreme World Champion with their Cristal Rose 2004 from magnum, and were again crowned Sparkling Wine Producer of the Year.

20 years ago Champagne Louis Roederer embarked upon a transition to renaissance viticulture in all its vineyards. Using massal selection, gentle pruning, long fallow periods, biodynamic composts, eschewing herbicides, pesticides and fungicides and instead relying on eco-friendly practices inspired by the permaculture model, as a result the vineyards have been flourishing in health and quality. Now 115 hectares of their 242 hectare estate have been certified organically-grown, with a further 124 hectares in the final stages of conversion, and the last 5 hectares following a year after that.

Despite the challenges, it has been a busy and successful year at Champagne Louis Roederer but we look forward to a more interactive 2021!

RUINART

The Contemporary & Conscious Jewel of Champagne since 1729

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, sustainability, art de vivre, refinement and art define the universe of Ruinart, together with a strength derived from three centuries of history.

Since 1729, the first ever established Champagne House has looked to preserve its ancestral savoir-faire and carefully cultivate the soil its exceptional wines are rooted in. In light of the ever-growing environmental challenges, Maison Ruinart, entering its 4th century of existence, takes a decisive step forward in its commitment to the preservation of living soils and the transmission of know-how, art and culture. Beyond necessity, sustainability is a source of innovation and a driving force of creativity for Ruinart.

In 2020, the Champagne House took an unprecedented action, launching an eco-designed packaging – **Ruinart Second Skin packaging** - an alternative to the gift box and an even more sustainable way of protecting and celebrating its precious wines. Building on 2 years of research and development, Maison Ruinart reveals an entirely recyclable, 100% paper case that reduces the bottle's packaging carbon footprint by 60%.

Ruinart Second Skin, made of natural wood fibres, began its life in eco-managed European forests. Its colour and texture are inspired by the Maison's historical Crayères, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Moulded to the shape of the Ruinart bottle, this case highlights the iconic silhouette and echoes the roundness of its wines, while preserving the taste integrity.

In this continuous effort to bring together aesthetics, authenticity and goodness, Maison Ruinart strives to craft, at all levels, a more sustainable French "art de vivre" and conscious luxury.

@ruinart

@ruinart_winemakers

TAITTINGER

2020 will certainly be remembered by us all and a year where we valued our friends and partners more than ever. The beginning of the decade marked a particularly historical moment for Taittinger with Vitalie Taittinger taking over from her father as president of the Maison, supported by her brother Clovis as General Manager (Sales and Marketing) and Damien le Sueur, General Manager (Operations). Weeks after the helm of our company was passed on to the next generation, the world went into lockdown: events were cancelled and Champagne sales dropped – there was no reason to celebrate. We have focused on the safety of our colleagues and supported our partners as the world became accustomed to the ‘new normal’ and the region was blessed with a magnificent harvest.

A big milestone of 2020 was the launch of our 2008 Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs. While the launch was later and very different to what we had initially planned, we were thrilled to see that the anticipation and excitement for this great vintage had not been dampened. The take up for this stunning vintage of our prestige cuvée was phenomenal - our only wish is that we had more to offer, but we have to remember that we are always at the mercy of mother nature when it comes to making the finest wines in great vintages.

We saw many of our partnerships go online, with BAFTA, BIFA, Natwest Everywoman Awards, Olivier Awards, Pink Lady Food Photography Awards and even Olympia Horseshow managed to reach its audiences online. It was inspiring to see everyone tackle this brave new world head on and make us feel connected when we could not be together.

Vitalie and Clovis also took to the online world: interviews and tastings with various journalists, customers and friends around the world kept us all united.

As the world of fine dining all but halted we also saw many of our customers getting innovative: putting together luxury takeaway packages, creating alternative outdoor spaces and planning for their grand opening.

‘Le Taittinger’ culinary prize also navigated its way through 2020, like everything, adaptation was key. In its 54th year, ‘Le Taittinger’ sees the best young chefs of the world coming together to compete – each year with a different champion ingredient. A successful UK final was able to take place, with Deepak Mallya, sous chef at The Ritz Restaurant declared our winner and we look forward to him competing in the final in early 2022.

Outlook for 2021

This time last year, being able to see our customers, partners and friends would not have seemed a noteworthy occasion, but for 2021 this is what we are looking forward to above all else. Of course, safety remains our first priority but we hope for a year of reconnecting, celebrating and supporting our friends in the hospitality sector who have faced the toughest of tough times.

There will be a lot of change and we have been working hard to ensure we are ready to embrace it. A key focus will be to remain flexible: if 2020 taught us anything it is to expect the unexpected. We anticipate the online world to still hold a strong presence in our lives – having all had to quickly develop our tech skills and realising that, in some instances, we can achieve just as much remotely as we can in person while also helping the environment.

The year will see the launch of our Comtes de Champagne Rosé 2008 and towards the end of the year we anticipate the release of our Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs 2011.

We also hope to see some of our partnership events return to the real world. Having celebrated the postponed 2020 British Independent Film Awards online in February 2021, we hope to raise a glass in person for the 2021 awards in December and to the Virgin Media British Academy Television Awards in June.

We will continue to operate with the same family values we always have done: a focus on the environment, looking after the earth, producing the highest quality wines from our Brut Réserve upwards and working closely with our partners.

Alternative cuvée and trends

Prestige Cuvées continue to do well for Champagne. Even in difficult times this category performs well as consumers seek reassurance – a watchword in fact for the whole category as we saw a trend, be it wine or Champagne, for the purchase of well-established brands.

Rosé continues to garner interest. There is much talk of the roaring 20's. Will this be a wine to capture our hearts in better times as we have seen in the past?

Awards/News

In 2020 we were thrilled to win the Sommelier Wine Awards “Sparkling Wine Producer of the Year” award for the second year running.

We were also delighted to receive a Platinum award from the Decanter World Wine Awards for our heritage cuvée, Les Folies de la Marquetterie. This cuvée is of a slightly different style to the rest of our range in that it spends a small amount of time in oak – it is made in homage to the Château de la Marquetterie that is central to the history of Champagne Taittinger and also made with foodies in mind.

The Comtes de Champagne Blanc de Blancs 2008 received a number of brilliant scores, including:

- 98+ points from Antonio Galloni, Vinous
- 98 points William Kelley, Wine Advocate
- Gold medal, Decanter World Wine Awards
- Gold medal, Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships
- 97 points, Gold, International Wine Challenge

Other great scores we received in 2020 included:

- Comtes de Champagne Rosé 2007, Gold, Sommelier Wine Awards
- Les Folies de la Marquetterie NV, Gold, Sommelier Wine Awards
- Nocturne Sec Rosé NV, Gold, Sommelier Wine Awards
- Nocturne Sec NV, Gold, Sommelier Wine Awards
- Prélude Grands Crus NV, 96 points, Anne Krebiehl MW, Decanter
- Les Folies de la Marquetterie NV, Gold, Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships

- Prélude Grands Crus NV, Gold, Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships

- Vintage Brut 2014, Gold, International Wine Challenge

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L' Académie Du Champagne

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The Champagne Academy

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