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NAPA VALLEY WINE ICON **BILL HARLAN**

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MARVIN R. SHANKEN

SPECIAL TRIBUTE

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100 GREAT GLOBAL
SPARKLING WINES

EXCITING NEW
NAPA TRAVEL
DESTINATIONS

OREGON AND
BRUNELLO
TASTING REPORTS

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Sparkling *WITH* Style



A guide to the many flavors to explore. Plus, 100 recommended bottles from around the world | BY LARRY RUBIN

A symbol of luxury and celebration, a glass of sparkling wine holds cultural cachet. Yet despite its romance, bubbly in general remains somewhat underappreciated when compared with still wine. The typically higher price tags on even introductory versions can be a barrier for some consumers, and sparkling wine is a complex and diverse world of its own, with numerous traditions, techniques and stylistic

approaches that newcomers may find tricky to navigate.

Over the past year, *Wine Spectator* editors have tasted more than 400 sparkling wines from around the world, uncovering a compelling range at attractive price points. For those looking to enjoy the world of sparkling wine, let this story guide you through key terminology and distinctive wine styles to aid discovery and refine your selections.



SUGAR STEPS ASIDE: EXTRA BRUT & BRUT NATURE

The rising popularity of wines with no or low *dosage* is driven by a surge of consumer enthusiasm for drier styles but also by the impacts of climate change. Champagne, the wine world's most northerly major production region, has been significantly affected. Over the past 60 years, the region's climate classification has shifted from "cool" to "moderate." In the past, successful vintages were more of a rarity. Today, however, conditions during the growing season regularly yield fully ripened grapes, supporting lower *dosage* levels.

According to EU regulations, Extra Brut wines may receive a small *dosage* but must be bottled with less than 6 g/L residual sugar. Brut Nature wines cannot receive a *dosage* at all and must not exceed 3 g/L residual sugar. To balance the austere character of these styles, some winemakers opt for extended lees aging, partial malolactic fermentation and/or additional bottle aging to soften the mouthfeel. With their firm, acidic frame, many examples can benefit from a year or two in the cellar. But in the hands of a capable *chef de cave*, a youthful bottle makes for a fine aperitif or pairs well with cuisines that enjoy a spritz of lemon.

The Sweet Life

Lower-*dosage* wines aren't for everyone. For some, the bracing acidity of a *dosage* zéro may be palate fatiguing. As an alternative, look to the plump juiciness of bottlings with an Extra Dry *dosage*. Despite the name, this category is actually sweeter than Brut—and it has gained popularity via the many fruit-forward, affordable Prosecco DOC offerings. Sparkling wines labeled simply Dry are sweeter still, with 17–32 g/L residual sugar. Their plush mouthfeel pairs well with spicy dishes or moderately sweet desserts.

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
DESIDERIO BISOL & FIGLI Dry Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartizze 2023	92	\$57
LE COLTURE Dry Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore di Cartizze NV	91	\$28
MASOTTINA Extra Dry Conegliano Valdobbiadene Superiore RDO Rive di Ogliano Levante 2023	91	\$30
RUGGERI & C. Extra Dry Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Giustino B. 2023	91	\$40
MIONETTO Dry Valdobbiadene Superiore di Cartizze NV	90	\$35
RUGGERI & C. Extra Dry Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Giall'Oro NV	89	\$25
TENUTA PEDERZANA Semisecco Lambrusco dell'Emilia Margherita 2022	89	\$23

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
GOSSET Extra Brut Champagne 21 Ans de Cave a Minima NV	96	\$200
RUINART Brut Nature Chardonnay Champagne Blanc Singulier Édition 19 NV	95	\$220
CA' DEL BOSCO Dosage Zéro Franciacorta Annamaria Clementi Riserva 2015	94	\$120
FERRARI Extra Brut Trento Giulio Ferrari Riserva del Fondatore 2012	94	\$190
DOMAINE LES MONTS FOURNOIS Extra Brut Champagne Vallée 130 Mois de Cave NV	94	\$125
PHILIPPONNAT Extra Brut Blanc de Noirs Champagne 2018	94	\$135
BELLAVISTA Extra Brut Franciacorta Alma Assemblage 1 NV	93	\$40
CHARTOGNE-TAILLET Extra Brut Champagne Ste.-Anne NV	93	\$70
VALENTIN LEFLAIVE Extra Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Sigma 20 4.0 NV	93	\$91
SOTER Extra Brut Willamette Valley Reserve NV	93	\$70
BARTH Brut Nature Riesling Rheingau Hattenheim Hassel 2014	92	\$80
CA' DEL BOSCO Extra Brut Franciacorta Cuvée Prestige 47 Edizione NV	92	\$45
GAMET Extra Brut Blanc de Noirs Champagne Rive Droite NV	92	\$50
ETTORE GERMANO Extra Brut Alta Langa 2020	92	\$40
LOIMER Brut Nature Blanc de Blancs Sekt Austria Langenlois Grosse Reserve NV	92	\$74
MOUSSÉ FILS Extra Brut Champagne Eugène NV	92	\$70
RAVENTÓS I BLANC Brut Nature Vino Espumoso de la Finca 2021	92	\$42
GUIDO BERLUCCHI Extra Brut Franciacorta '61 NV	91	\$39
JUVÉ Y CAMPS Brut Nature Cava Reserva de la Familia Gran Reserva 2019	91	\$25
RAVENTÓS I BLANC Extra Brut Blanc de Blancs Vino Espumoso 2022	91	\$25
DOMAINE DE LA TAILLE AUX LOUPS Montlouis Sur Loire Triple Zéro NV	91	\$37
BARONE PIZZINI Brut Nature Franciacorta Animante NV	90	\$40
FRANÇOIS CHIDAINE Brut Nature Montlouis Sur Loire Méthode Traditionnelle 2020	90	\$35
NICOLAS FEUILLATTE Extra Brut Champagne Réserve Exclusive NV	90	\$45
ROGER GOULART Extra Brut Cava Gran Reserva 2020	90	\$27
FERMÍ BOHIGAS Extra Brut Cava Gran Reserva 2020	88	\$25
EL CEP Brut Nature Blanc de Blancs Cava Gelida Gran Reserva 2019	88	\$24

IN THE PINK: BUBBLY ROSÉS

As a group, sparkling rosés offer tremendous diversity, with personalities shaped by grape blends and *dosage* levels as well as skin contact during production. Pale pink versions can be as chalky and precise as the most austere white, while more deeply hued examples offer smoky red fruit and herbal notes and noticeable tannins.

There are two methods for giving these wines their color: blending and *saignée*. In still winemaking, blending white and red wines to create a rosé is rare, but in the sparkling wine world, it is the most common approach. A more limited number are produced using the *saignée* method. This technique typically crafts more deeply hued rosés by soaking crushed grapes with their skins until the juice absorbs enough pigment, tannins and flavor to suit the winemaker; it's then bled off the skins.

Sparkling rosés are often more expensive than their white counterparts due to the additional labor required in their



production; top producers also utilize red grapes harvested with the desired level of color and ripeness, often indicating lower yields—which represents a cost potentially passed on to the consumer.

Despite their steeper price tags, sparkling rosés have become increasingly

popular in recent decades, driven in part by powerhouse brands but also by small growers. Sommeliers leverage bubbly's luxurious appeal with rosé's food-friendly versatility; pale versions pair beautifully with oysters, while fuller, *saignée* styles can match a grilled steak.

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
BOLLINGER Brut Rosé Champagne La Grande Année 2015	97	\$307
BILLECART-SALMON Brut Rosé Champagne Elisabeth Salmon 2012	95	\$230
CA' DEL BOSCO Extra Brut Rosé Franciacorta Annamaria Clementi Riserva 2015	94	\$120
CHARTOGNE-TAILLET Brut Rosé Champagne NV	93	\$82
GLORIA FERRER Rosé Carneros Carneros Cuvée Late Disgorged 2018	93	\$95
PERRIER-JOUËT Brut Rosé Champagne Blason NV	93	\$75
DOMAINE CHANDON Pinot Noir Los Carneros Rosé Réserve NV	92	\$43
FERRARI Brut Rosé Trento Perlé Riserva 2017	92	\$74
NICOLAS FEUILLATTE Brut Rosé Champagne Réserve Exclusive NV	92	\$55
GAMET Brut Rosé Champagne NV	92	\$53
IRON HORSE Brut Rosé Green Valley of Russian River Valley 2019	92	\$75
PIPER-HEIDSIECK Brut Rosé Champagne Sauvage NV	92	\$75
ROEDERER ESTATE Brut Rosé Anderson Valley NV	92	\$39
MONTAUDON Brut Rosé Champagne La Grande Rose NV	91	\$53
MUMM NAPA Brut Rosé California NV	91	\$24
CANARD-DUCHÊNE Brut Rosé Champagne NV	90	\$54
LE COLTURE Brut Rosé Prosecco 2022	90	\$16
JUVÉ Y CAMPS Brut Rosé Pinot Noir Cava Essential NV	90	\$25
LLOPART Brut Rosé Vino Espumoso Corpinnat Reserva 2021	90	\$32
RAVENTÓS I BLANC Brut Rosé Vino Espumoso de Nit 2022	90	\$28
EL CEP Brut Rosé Pinot Noir Cava Gelida Reserva 2021	89	\$24
SOTER Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Rosé Planet Oregon 2023	89	\$24
VEUVE AMBAL Brut Rosé Crémant de Bourgogne Grande Cuvée NV	89	\$20
VALDO Brut Rosé Prosecco Marca Oro 2023	88	\$15

Lambrusco

Primarily produced in Emilia-Romagna from a family of grapes sharing its name, Lambrusco offers bright, balsamiclike tartness, dark fruit and herb flavors, and gentle effervescence. Once a unique local specialty, these dry reds have gained appeal abroad as an aperitif, often paired with light snacks.

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
MEDICI ERMETE Secco Lambrusco Reggiano Arte e Concerto 2023	90	\$26
PALTRINIERI Secco Lambrusco di Sorbara Radice 2023	90	\$24
CLETO CHIARLI E FIGLI Secco Lambrusco di Sorbara del Fondatore 2023	89	\$21
CLETO CHIARLI E FIGLI Secco Lambrusco Grasparossa di Castelvetro Nero Noir 2023	89	\$18
PALTRINIERI Secco Lambrusco di Sorbara Leclisse 2023	89	\$25
LINI ORESTE & FIGLI Lambrusco dell'Emilia Red Labrusca 910 NV	88	\$17
LINI ORESTE & FIGLI Lambrusco dell'Emilia Rosé Labrusca 910 NV	88	\$17
MEDICI ERMETE Reggiano Lambrusco Quercioli NV	88	\$13