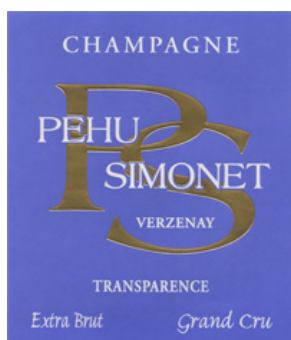


Wines of the Month: Top 15 Sparkling Wines for the New Year

94 puntos

Pehu-Simonet Champagne Extra Brut Transparence Grand Cru



David Pehu blended his latest release of Extra Brut from the 2009 vintage, pinot noir (70 percent) and chardonnay (disgorged October 2013). The wine underwent a partial malolactic fermentation, though it was not Pehu's intention. Perhaps that converted what might have otherwise seemed to be intense acidity into a fierce mineral expression of the limestone soils of Verzenay. It feels formidable in structure, deep in savory complexity, yet the essence of the wine is lightness, notes of white flowers and fresh pear. Rebecca Banks of Balthazar noted that the wine is "not shy, but expressive in all the right ways." — Wine, Top 15 Sparkling Wines for the New Year, Web Exclusive

94 puntos

Michael Gonet 2002 Champagne Brut Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs



(Best Buy) Powerfully compressed and tense with searing 2002 acidity, this feels fresh in its crisp apple, grapefruit and honeycomb buzz of flavor. It shows a more mature side in notes of preserved lemon and darker notes of smoky earthiness. Gripping in its structure, this needs bottle age to soften. —JOSHUA GREENE

94 puntos

Gloria Ferrer 2006 Carneros Royal Cuvée



(Best Buy) The Ferrer family created Royal Cuvée to serve King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia of Spain when they visited California in 1987. Blended from many of the best lots at the family's Carneros estate, it's quite impressive thanks, in part, to a long season that delivered ideal ripeness. Two-thirds pinot noir and one-third chardonnay, it feels ripe in the best sense, bold in its fruit, with an impression of a juicy Bartlett pear, its fragrant nectar dripping down your chin. Yet it's fully dry and completely harmonious, the mousse fine, the delicate acidity giving it a bright, ...Read more

91 puntos

Roederer Estate 2006 Anderson Valley L'Ermitage Brut Rosé



Roederer Estate winemaker Arnaud Weyrich recalls the lead-up to the 2006 vintage well: Torrential winter rains caused mudslides and floods, and, for a few days, Anderson Valley was virtually cut off from the rest of civilization. That abundant soil moisture led to a bumper crop of plump, healthy berries. L'Ermitage Rosé draws on many of the vintage's choice lots of pinot noir and chardonnay, supported by barrel-aged reserve chardonnay from the 2003 vintage. This leads with a leafy scent of barely ripe pinot noir, autumnal and quiet, supported by a delicate toasty impression from seven years on its lees in bottle. With ...Read more

93 puntos

Raventós i Blanc 2010 Penedès Brut de la Finca



Pepe Raventós, whose grandfather was a partner and head winemaker at Codorníu, makes elegant sparklers from estate-grown fruit in Conca del Riu Anoia—where he gave up the Cava appellation and is lobbying to establish a new DO. This wine makes a strong argument for the distinctive character of that region's fruit: The mineral trajectory of its pale ripe flavor tastes like fruit grown in limestone soil. With

all the sophistication of a bottle-fermented sparkler—the pale almond notes and the scent of a crusty baguette—this wine’s white fruit flavors keep juicing up from behind the tongue, ...Read more

93 puntos

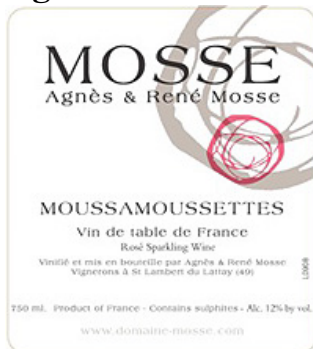
Bründlmayer 2008 Kamptal Sekt



Willi Bründlmayer has made sparkling wines since 1989; his latest release blends pinots noir, blanc and gris with grüner veltliner. It’s world-class fizz, at once creamy and leesy as well as firm and lemon-crisp—a sparkling wine worthy of a big glass, to let the flavors expand and grow complex. —TARA Q. THOMAS

92 puntos

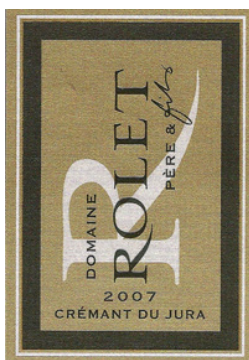
Agnès & René Mosse Vin de France Moussamoussettes



A blend of grolleau gris and gamay, this wine’s coppery color is no clue to the delicacy and freshness you’ll find on the palate. It has the juiciness of pear cider and the briskness of a salted plum, all touched by a fine stream of bubbles. Pour it with swordfish crudo, dressed with pistachio and peppery olive oil. — JOSHUA GREENE

92 puntos

Domaine Rolet 2008 Crémant du Jura Blanc Brut



Rolet makes a range of crémants, this one about two-thirds chardonnay, the balance from pousard and pinot noir. It remained on the lees for 40 months, developing aromas of toasted nuts and cinnamon. Chalky mineral acidity frames the wine's juicy flavors of white peach and tangerine, enlivened by crushed black pepper notes. It's fresh and lively, with a long, smooth finish. —STEPHANIE JOHNSON

92 puntos

Bisol Desiderio & Figli 2012 Prosecco di Valdobbiadene Superiore Dry Crède



A clean and fragrant Prosecco, this wine's white rose-petal scent and green-apple flavors last in a dry finish. It has the crisp refreshment of a cucumber, and creaminess to the texture to balance that crunch. For cracked crab. —JOSHUA GREENE

91 puntos

Filipa Pato Portugal 3B Metodo Tradicional



Baga provides the tart cherry and chalk scents to the blend, while bical adds citrusy acidity, creating a Ruby Red grapefruit freshness in this earthy sparkling wine. It's clean, cool and zesty, tart enough to cut through leitão (the local roast suckling pig) or to serve with cheeses at the end of the meal. —JOSHUA GREENE

91 puntos

Jauma 2013 Blewitt Springs Pet Nat Chenin Blanc



A crisp, dry chenin with delicate scents of spring flowers, chamomile and beeswax, this is clean, with a pleasing grip. It's an unusual bubbly white for stuffed zucchini flowers or grilled seabass. —JOSHUA GREENE

91 puntos

Marenco 2013 Brachetto d'Acqui Pineto



Clean and bright, this light, sparkling red is refreshingly brisk. The flavors touch on wild strawberries, tart cherries and blood oranges. Delicious with prosciutto. —JOSHUA GREENE

90 puntos

Karanika Amyntaion Brut



From a biodynamically run estate on the high, cool plateau of Amyndeon in northern Greece, this xinomavro ferments in the classic Champagne method. It's full bodied and earthy, with xinomavro's tart red cherry flavor and sharp acidity. Point that acid at some juicy tomato fritters or the fried anchovies from Bon Chovie at Smorgasburg in Brooklyn. —[TARA Q. THOMAS](#)

90 puntos

Langmann Weststeiermark Schilcher Frizzante Rose



(Best Buy) Langmann specializes in schilcher, a grape unique to Western Styria. It makes a wild rosé, dark with berry flavor and foresty in its herbal accents. Bubbles add lift and ebullience; charcuterie on the side would add extra deliciousness. —[TARA Q. THOMAS](#)