

*delimited
region*

origins

The Champagne appellation

reputation

values

tradition

*a benchmark
for excellence*

The story of the Champagne appellation

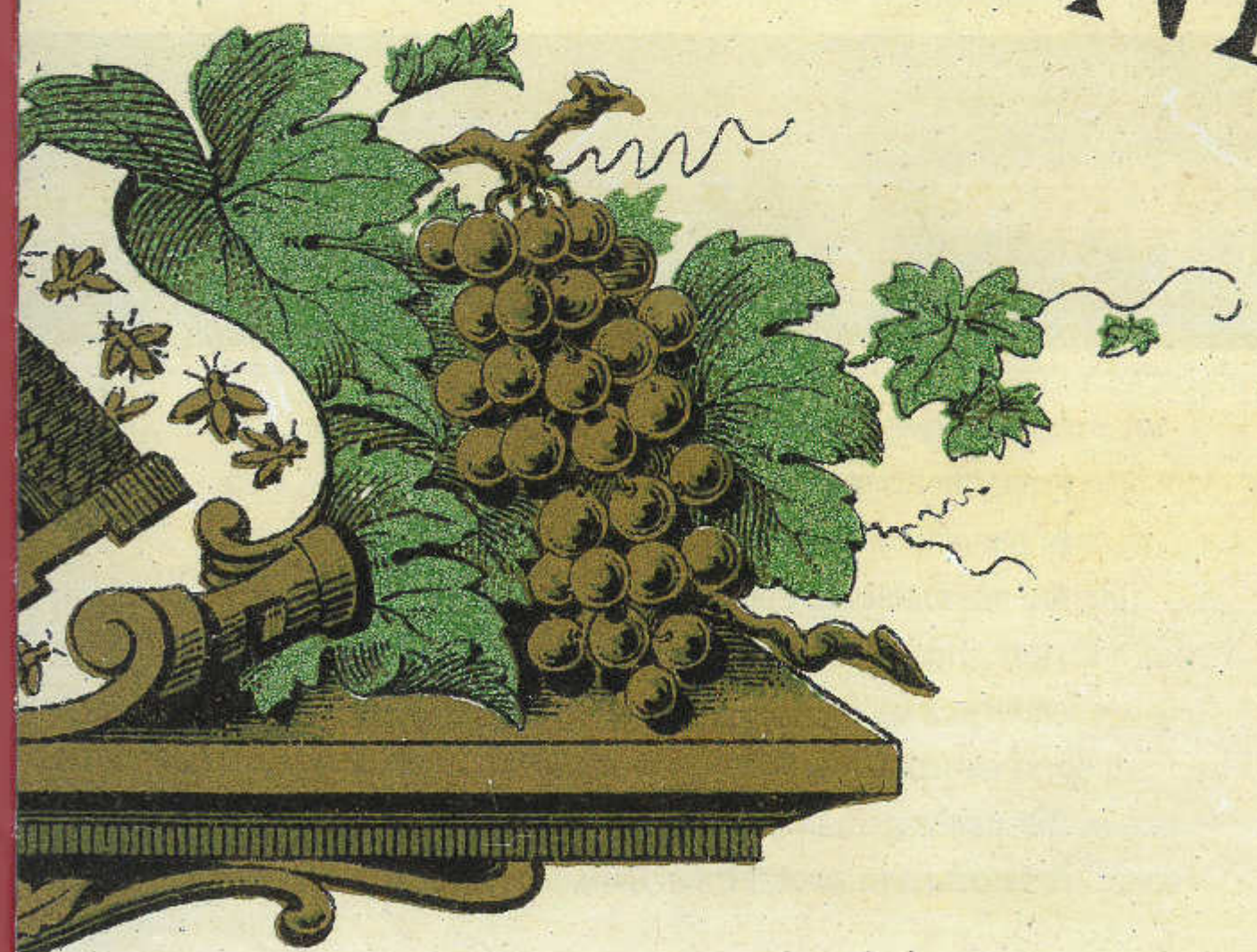
The origins of the legend of Champagne

Consecration of the Champagne appellation

Demands of the people of Champagne regarding appellation

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CHAMPAGNE



The story of the world-famous Champagne appellation started **a long time ago** with an exceptional **terroir** that produced wines like no other. Over the centuries man's talent transformed the wines' **characteristic effervescence** into the purest expression of **a very special delicacy**. The following pages trace the history of a unique area of appellation that has been developing

battle for delimitation was at its height. With the official recognition of the **Appellation d'origine contrôlée Champagne** came the culmination of a 20-year process dedicated to the demarcation and regulation of the Champagne production area. At the start of the Third Millennium, the Champenois may be justly proud of their achievements. The Champagne



Chelley subsoil.

Andrea Landini, oil on canvas, 1890.

Harvesting in the early 20th century.

Map taken from the Atlas de la France Viticole by Louis Larmat.

Close-up of the bubbles in Champagne.

for hundreds of years – and is still developing today. From the Romans who first made their mark on the area to the glittering Champagne Houses that we see today, the making of the appellation reads like an adventure story. Things did not always go smoothly by any means and it is a tribute to human endeavour that Champagne was already something of a **legend** at the start of the 20th century. The Champenois by that time were fiercely determined **to protect** their precious heritage and the

appellation has come to stand as **a benchmark for excellence** among producers and consumers who look to it for authenticity and an almost visionary quality. To build on that success is the task of the *Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne*, the joint trade association that represents all Champagne Houses and Growers. One of its key missions is to preserve the **exclusive nature** of the Champagne appellation and **promote** its qualities to the widest possible audience.

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chalk

*prise
de mousse*

*wine
of kings*

*the legend
of Champagne*

*the French
spirit*

abbeys

blending

Contents

- ① A historic *terroir*
- ② The genius of Champagne wine-making
- ③ Wines with a reputation

The origins of the Champagne appellation lie in a legendary product born of two vital assets. First, a highly original *terroir* that combines a northern climate with chalky subsoil and sloping hillsides – distinctive features that produce equally distinctive wines. Next, the generations of highly ingenious wine-growers who focussed on mastering the effervescence. Champagne’s world-wide



Late 19th century mosaic



Chalk cliff

reputation and prestige status is entirely due to their vision and determination.

① A historic *terroir*

The **Romans** were great wine connoisseurs and expert wine growers. They knew which slopes were best suited to vine cultivation, choosing well-drained lands with good exposure to sunlight, and vines capable of withstanding the rigours of the northern climate.

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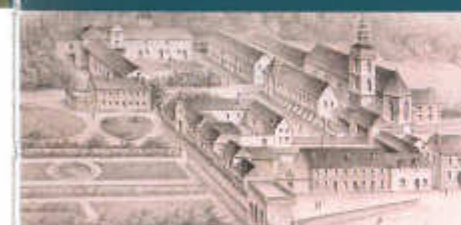
Next came **the bishops** and the **great ecclesiastical vineyard owners**. The Bishop of Reims and the great abbeys of Hautvillers, Saint-Thierry, Reims – Saint-Remi and Saint-Nicaise – all owned substantial vineyards and laid the basis of the growing methods and wine-making skills. In the Middle Ages, Champagne wines had a **slightly effervescent quality** due to the partial fermentation of the musts. These were **clairet wines: very pale red**

The medieval vineyard

Vineyards on the Montagne de Reims: near Reims, on the upper and lower slopes, around the Abbey of St-Thierry; to the west and south of Reims, around Coulommès-la-Montagne, Serriers, Taissy and as far as Verzenay.

Vineyards along the Marne River: plantings were less dense in the Marne Valley but already featured the celebrated vineyards of Epernay, the Abbey of Hautvillers and Ay. **13th century onwards:** vine growing spread to the south of the Montagne de Reims; Cramant, Chouilly and Cuis, south of the Marne, stated

or re-stated their commitment to wine-growing. Vineyards continued to thrive around Reims itself, from Cormicy in the northwest to Verzy in the southwest and in the Valley of Ardre, from Courville to Chaumuzy. Lastly there were very well developed vineyards around Bar-sur-Aube, in the Riceys and around Troyes.



The Abbey of Hautvillers

or white, lively, light and low in sugar. They were already quite distinctive with characteristics typical of wines from northern vineyards planted on chalky subsoils.

The vines were densely planted **en foule** and required a constant succession of seasonal tasks. The emphasis was firmly on pruning, already regarded as the basis of successful viticulture – the pruning hook had become the symbol of the wine-grower.

② The genius of Champagne wine-making

Blending

Blending was unintentionally part of the wine-making process in the time of the monasteries. **Grapes** from different varieties and various sites would be delivered by local wine-growers as payment of the tithe,



Harvesting scene



Painting of Dom Perignon, by José Froppa.



Detail from a 15th century book illumination.

and the monks would press these grapes together. But blending became an expert **art** in the hands of such notable religious wine-makers as the monk Dom Perignon who used the selection of grapes of different origins to improve the balance of the finished wine. Champagne Houses would subsequently blend **wines** from grapes of different **varieties, sites and even years**, so as to produce a final *cuvée* that was superior

in quality to any one of them, expressing the rich diversity of its original *terroir*.

Blending made it possible to create more harmonious wines. It also opened the way to wines of a certain defined character with a **consistent taste and quality** – something that was quite unheard of at the time when wine-makers were largely at the mercy of Nature.

White wines from black grapes

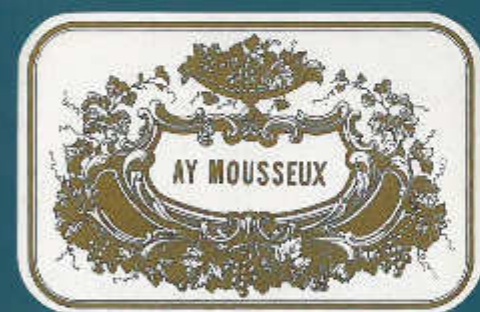
Traditionally, there were two main **grape varieties** in Champagne: **Gouais**, used to make the red *vins de Montagne*; and **Fromenteau**, a variety with pale pinkish grey berries, used to make the clear white *vins de rivière*. These limpid white wines were made from the first musts to avoid colouring the juice, and their natural sparkle was already much appreciated from the start of the

Aÿ wines

were straw coloured, verging on pale pink and made from *Fromenteau* grapes. Charles Estienne and Jean Liébault, in their *L'Agriculture et maison rustique* (1583) described them as "light and fawn coloured, subtle and delicate with a taste most pleasing to the palate".

14th century. In 1320 the medieval French writer Watriquet de Couvin described them in his *Dit des trois Dames de Paris*, as "**clear, quivering, strong, delicate and fresh on a discerning palate**".

The 14th century also marked a change in direction as popular taste turned towards white wines with more colour, and pale, light reds known as *clairnet*



Old wine label



Cover page of "La Nouvelle Maison Rustique"



Old wine bottle

wines. The most fashionable wines at the time were those from **Aÿ**, a *cru* in the Marne Valley that for a while came to refer to all of the River wines. By the mid-16th century, all Champagne wines had become famous and the River vineyards, in a constant quest for improvement, started production of a *vin gris* from a new, better-quality grape called the **Pinot noir**. Harvesting commenced half an hour after sunrise and continued until 9-10am. The grapes were then pressed

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slowly so as to avoid colouring the first musts, producing a **lustrous, limpid white** wine with good cellaring potential.

Sparkling Champagne wines

The stroke of genius that was to prove the making of the Champagne legend was learning to **master the effervescence**.

The effervescence phenomenon

Due to the northerly climate in Champagne, the grapes were harvested late in the season, the musts being then stored in barrels where they would

start to ferment. The onset of winter interrupted the fermentation which would only resume when the weather turned warmer – although most of the carbon dioxide escaped through the barrels.



The delicacy of effervescence

It seems that the Aÿ vineyards did originally produce a traditionally fermented, sparkling wine called *Tocane*. Although notoriously acidic, this became much sought after towards 1675, encouraging an increasing number of estates to jump on the bandwagon. They soon realised that the wines became effervescent once **bottled**, in the time between the harvest and the following May. Until the 1730s however, effervescence remained a hit-or-miss and potentially explosive process,

solely reserved for acidic, *blanc de blancs* wines with a pronounced tendency to natural fermentation. Subsequently, winegrowers noticed that **vin gris** would also start to **sparkle** if bottled in the first quarter of the March moon following the harvest.

Meanwhile, faced with the mounting cost of breakages, producers were looking



Florent Louis Heidsieck, founder of the House of Heidsieck.



Nicolas Ruinart, founder of the House of Ruinart.

The first Champagne Houses

The first **wine merchants** set up business in Reims, Epernay and Ay. The best known are Bertin du Rocheret, Chertemps, Drouin de la Vieville, Geoffroy, Gosset and de Partelaine. The first Champagne Houses were founded in the 18th century in response to the increasing demand for

effervescent Champagne wines. Production was a **laborious and delicate** process however, calling for considerable resources and expertise. The techniques involved ranged from selective pressing and blending to the skilful management of the *prise de mousse*, meanwhile addressing such issues as prolonged ageing in bottles, the correct choice of bottle and cork and the

appropriate solutions for long-haul shipping.

The first Champagne House, Ruinart, opened in 1729 followed by Chanoine in 1730, Fourneaux in 1734, Moët in 1743, Vander-Veken in 1757, Delamotte in 1760, Dubois in 1765, Veuve Clicquot in 1772, Heidsieck in 1785 and Jacquesson in 1798.

for ways to improve the quality of the glass and the stopper. First came new bottles, designed to withstand the intense pressure. Next, the wooden plug was replaced by a **tight-fitting cork**.

So began a drive to improve the *prise de mousse* (literally “capturing the sparkle”) that started in 1730 and continues to this day.



Claude Moët, founder of the House of Moët.

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③ Wines with a reputation

Champagne wine has had close associations with the monarchy and the nobility since Clovis was baptised king of the Franks in Reims in the fifth century. His coronation marked the birth of the kingdom of France and established Champagne as the wine of coronation, later known as **“the wine of kings and the king of wines.”**

Jean-Benoît Moët meets Napoleon Bonaparte in 1807.



Clovis' baptism in Reims.



Madame de Pompadour



Alexander I, Tsar of Russia.

“The sparkling froth of this fresh wine is the dazzling image of us, the French”.

Voltaire

When Champagne wines became effervescent in the late 1700s, they were an **instant success** at court and with the rich and important.

In the early 19th century, the Champagne Houses launched a promotional campaign aimed at elitist aristocratic circles around the world. Their adventurous and often perilous journeys took them to countries as far afield as Russia and the USA...

Champagne came to symbolise the **spirit of France**, French culture and liberal thinking.

The 19th century was a time of prosperity and celebration, and Champagne's reputation spread among **elitist circles** all around the world. Whatever the occasion, **people celebrated with Champagne**. At the turn of the century, bubbling Champagne entered its golden age, toast of the *belle époque* and the Roaring Twenties.



Historic labels

Background to the name Champagne.

“Campania remensis” was the name first given to the countryside around Reims in the sixth century. From the 10th-12th century, the ecclesiastical principalities developed in the north of the region while the county of Champagne in the south remained the domain of the

counts until it was absorbed by the kingdom of France in the late 13th century. From the 13th to 15th centuries, the wines of Champagne were called *vins de rivière* (river wines) or *vins de montagne* (mountain wines). Gradually they became known by the name of the *cru* – Ay, Sillery, etc – a practice that persisted until the late 19th century.

People first started to refer to “Champagne wine” (as opposed to the medieval term *vin de France*) in or around 1600. The term then appeared on bottle labels together with the name of the *cru* and the producer. The term *mousseux* (“sparkling”) was also common. The name Champagne increasingly came to mean

a collective term for Champagne wines. It became the official term in 1911 under pressure from wine-growers who called for a monopoly of the “Champagne” appellation. Henceforth, producers were to use the name Champagne on all labels, corks and any instructional material.

Birth of the appellation lobby

The success of Champagne wines in the 19th century attracted numerous imitations from other producers. 1843: a group of Champagne Houses successfully prosecuted producers in Tours for passing their wines off

as Champagne and displaying the names Ay and Verzy on the corks. 1882: the Champagne Houses formed the *Syndicat du commerce des vins de Champagne* Union of the Champagne Wine Trade. 1885: the union prosecuted a wine merchant in Saumur for using the names Ay, Sillery and Champagne.

1887: the court of Angers ruled in favour of wine-growers in Champagne, decreeing that the term Champagne “referred simultaneously to the place and methods of production of certain wines specifically denoted by that name and by no other.” Some months later the court further decreed that “the term Champagne or

Champagne wine is exclusively reserved for a wine originating and produced in Champagne, an ancient French province with geographical boundaries that may be neither expanded nor diminished”. 1889: these decrees were confirmed by the *Cour de cassation* (higher court).



At the dawn of the 20th century

Champagne had already achieved near-legendary status and become synonymous with celebration all around the world.

Champagne now had an established identity, winning preliminary recognition in the courts as the name that united all the wines produced in the province.

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ARRONDISSEMENT

EPERNAY

CANTON

EPERNAY

COMMUNE

EPERNAY

DÉLIMITATION DE LA CHAMPAGNE VITICOLE

(Application de la loi du 22 Juillet 1927)

AOC PROCÈS-VERBAL

des décisions de la Commission interdépartementale, concernant la
commune de EPERNAY
canton de EPERNAY
arrondissement de EPERNAY

Les membres de la Commission interdépartementale prévue par l'art. 6
de la loi du 22 juillet 1927, se sont réunis le 14 AVRIL 32
à Châlons-sur-Marne, à la direction des ~~services~~ services agricoles
sur la convocation de M. le Préfet de la Marne.

law of 1927

Etaient présents :

1. CHEA Gaston
2. ROBERT AMAND
3. BARRE Ch.
4. LEBRUN Directeur des services agricoles
5. Secrétaire Rapporteur.
6. production
7. conditions
8.

Excusés MM. : FANDEUX E. - PHILBERT - BLOT

La Commission, après avoir examiné le procès-verbal de la Commission
compétente, en date du Judi 30 Août 1928.

delimitation

et des observations de MM. Néant
consignées dans une note écrite en date du Néant
désigne comme rentrant dans les catégories visées par la loi, les parcelles portées
sur les pages 30. ci-jointes.

Fait à Châlons, le 14 AVRIL 32.

Le Président,

Les Membres

@ Zany

Handwritten signatures and initials

Contents

- ① New departures
- ② Delimitation
- ③ Champagne quality rules

At the beginning of the century, the Champagne vineyard lay in shreds, devastated by the phylloxera epidemic then the First World War. As wine-growers set to work replanting, they became aware of the need to protect their collective heritage. In the years that followed, a law was passed marking the boundaries of the Champagne terroir and defining rules and regulations. The recognition of the *appellation d'origine*



Experimental sulphur sprayer, early 20th century



Site of a phylloxera outbreak



Planting, early 20th century

contrôlée Champagne in 1936 marked the culmination of a century old process.

① New departures

By the end of the 19th century, the vast Champagne vineyard had been virtually wiped out by the phylloxera epidemic. Faced with imminent catastrophe, wine-growers and major Champagne Houses (which owned vines of their

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own) joined forces and in 1898 formed the *Association viticole champenoise* (AVC): Wine-growing Association of Champagne.

Its objectives were to combat phylloxera, reconstitute the vineyards, conduct research and experiments and train wine-growers in new techniques.

Realising that all diseased vines would have to be pulled up and **replaced with grafted vines**, the AVC paved the way



Selecting seeds, early 20th century



Dealing the vines against disease, early 20th century

for progress. Dense plantings were replaced by **trained vines**, effectively reducing the number of plants per hectare from 40,000 to 9,000.

At the same time, wine-growers learned new methods of pruning, trellising, pinching-back and other techniques. By 1919, the once 60,000-strong hectare vineyard had been reduced to a handful of selected sites covering just **12,000 hectares**.

② Delimitation

Following the lawsuits won by the Champagne Houses in the 19th century, the name Champagne was exclusively reserved for **wines harvested and produced in Champagne**.

The precise limits of the **area in question** remained to be defined. Delimitation grew increasingly critical however as new and unscrupulous producers began importing



Alphonse Perrin and Gaston Pottévin

Development of the wine-growers' unions.
The *Fédération des syndicats de la Champagne* representing 31 wine-growers' unions came into being on



Edmond Bin, founding president of the SGV

21 August 1904, on the initiative of Edmond Bin, the first chairman, and his two secretaries, Gaston Pottévin and Alphonse Perrin. Ten years later, it boasted upwards of 10,000

members representing 121 unions and the majority of wine-growers. In 1919, the Federation evolved into the *Syndicat général des vignerons de la Champagne délimitée* (General Union of wine-growers in the delimited area of Champagne).

wines from other areas. Faced with mounting fraud, the Federation of Champagne Unions (*Fédération des syndicats*, formed in 1904) called for the demarcation of the Champagne vineyard.

On **22 July 1927 a law was passed** defining the zone of Champagne production. The judicial decision rested on **traditional land usage**: areas eligible for appellation

were to be under vine at the time of legislation or prior to the phylloxera epidemic.

An interdepartmental commission was appointed to consider lists of eligible parcels (vineyard sites) submitted by communes.



21 August 1904: The founders of the Fédération des syndicats de la Champagne

By establishing a zone of appellation based on **consensus**, the approach had its merits, whatever shortcomings may have arisen in the years that followed.

Two delimited areas

The geographical area or authorised production area, being the area within which the various stages of Champagne wine-making must be confined, in accordance with usage and legally defined rules of production.

The production area or "demarcated plots", being those parcels of land in the geographical area that were under vine in 1927 or prior to the phylloxera epidemic.

Problems of delimitation

The first decree of "Champagne" appellation proposed on 17

December 1908 was controversial to say the least.

It enraged wine-growers in the Aube who it excluded and it failed to provide any legal means of enforcement. Far from satisfying wine-growers, the proposal led to widespread feelings of resentment that worsened following the disastrous harvests of 1910 and culminated in revolt in January 1911.

On 10 February 1911, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced a series of protective measures following demands from wine-growers in the Marne in consultations with the *syndicat du commerce des vins de Champagne* (Union of Champagne Wines Trades). Henceforth the wine was to be produced on separate premises and the name "Champagne" was to be displayed on bottles, corks, invoices and other literature.

Meanwhile growers in the Aube continued their struggle for inclusion in the appellation and their claims led to a new law passed on 6 May 1919.

It prompted a series of legal **recriminations** by growers in the Marne that would rumble on until 1925 when the issue of delimitation was submitted to the French Government for arbitration.



Wine-growers demonstrating, January 1911.

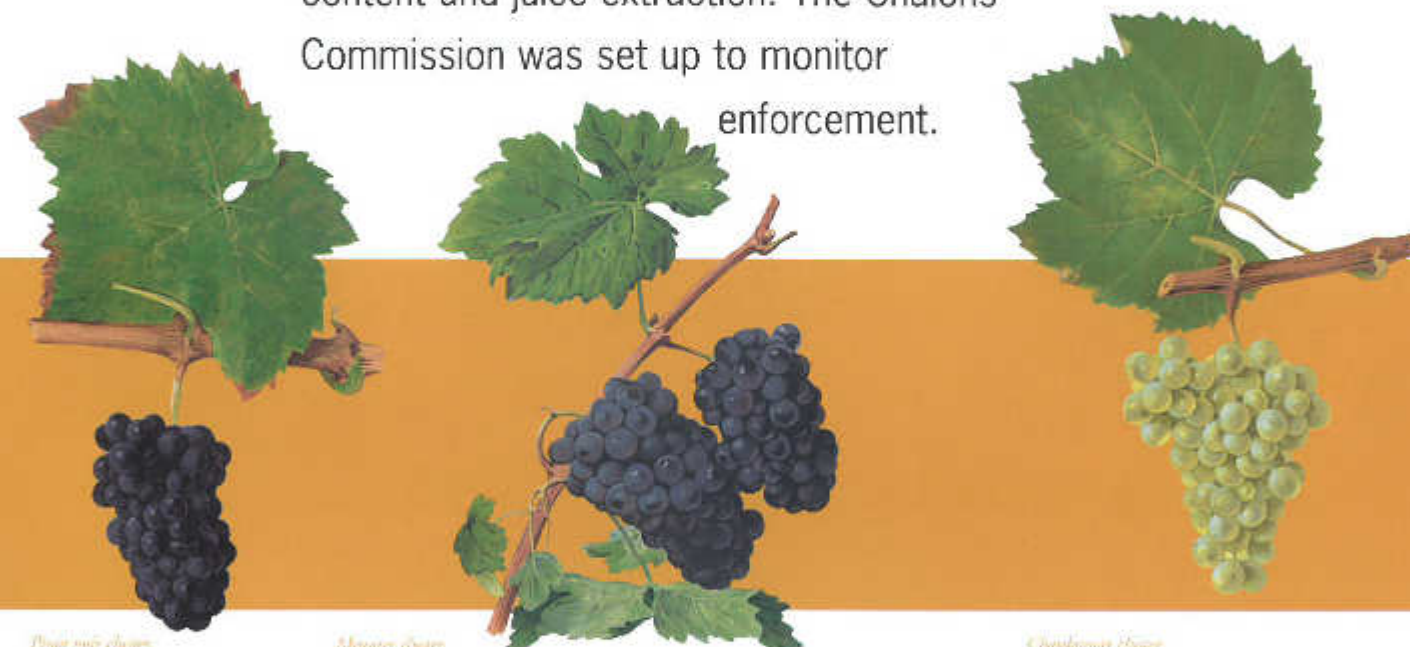
③ **Champagne quality rules**

The law of 1927 also established the first Champagne quality rules. The only authorised vine stocks were those **traditionally grown** in Champagne: *Pinot noir*, *Meunier* and *Chardonnay*, plus two historic vine stocks, *Arbanne* and *Petit Meslier*.

But the real battle for quality came a few years later in the period 1931-1935 following **massive over-production**

and a slump in sales that sent the price of grapes tumbling.

In response to demand from growers, a special decree was passed on 30 September 1935 specifying further **quality measures** relating to yield, minimum alcohol content and juice extraction. The Châlons Commission was set up to monitor enforcement.



With vineyards in crisis throughout France, French wine-growing associations called on the **Government** to support their drive to regulate and develop certain appellations, monitor production and prosecute cases of fraud.

Their demands gave rise to the principles of **appellation d'origine contrôlée (Appellation of Controlled Origin)** and laid the foundations of the *Comité national des*

appellations d'origine (subsequently the INAO) which was formed on 30 July 1935.

Definition of appellation d'origine (law of 1919)

"The appellation d'origine is the geographical designation of a country, region or location that serves to denote a product with qualities or characteristics that are essentially or exclusively due to the geographical environment, including both natural and human factors, of that country, region or location from which it originates."

Advantages of AOC classification (INAO Congress)

"An AOC area is born of an alliance between the natural environment and human ingenuity. From that alliance comes an AOC product with **unique, inimitable characteristics**, a product so different that it complements rather than competes with other products. An AOC product also has **added value** due to its strong identity and highly individual personality."

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On **29 June 1936** Champagne was declared an appellation d'origine contrôlée. That decree also ratified the laws and decrees of 1919, 1927 and 1935 laying

down the rules requested by wine-growers in Champagne.

The Champagne label

Due to the unity of the Champagne appellation and its long tradition of wine-growing, it is not compulsory to mention the AOC on the Champagne label.



AOC meeting of winegrowers and representatives of Champagne Houses.

The struggle to regulate and protect the Champagne appellation started long before AOC classification. Witness the judicial decision of 1887, the Law of 1911, the delimitation of 1927 and the Legal Decree of 1935.

The establishment of the Champagne AOC was a decisive step forwards. Henceforth, Champagne became part of the national heritage and its people were sanctioned by the INAO to maintain respect for their collective identity.

*common
heritage*

progress

excellence

*CIVC
protection*

*a famous
appellation*

Contents

- ① A joint trade association
- ② Revisions to the original delimitation
- ③ Quality enforcement
- ④ Protection of the Champagne appellation

The creation of the *Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne** or CIVC in 1941 gave formal expression to the dialogue between Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses that had developed at the start of the century. With the backing of the INAO, both parties now became responsible for the running of the Champagne appellation. Their priorities were to improve delimitation, reinforce regulation and defend the Champagne AOC against usurpation.

* the trade association representing all Champagne Houses and Growers

Original mandate of the CIVC

- To promote the economic development of the Champagne market
- To enforce loyal and regular usage and standards of quality

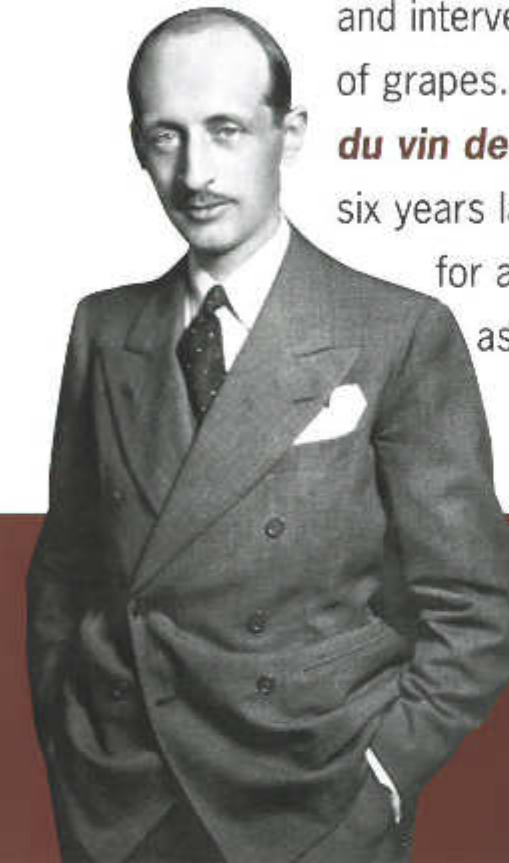
- To regulate the grape market and take action as necessary to prevent shortages or over-production

Over the years, the CIVC's mandate has evolved to focus on the following areas:

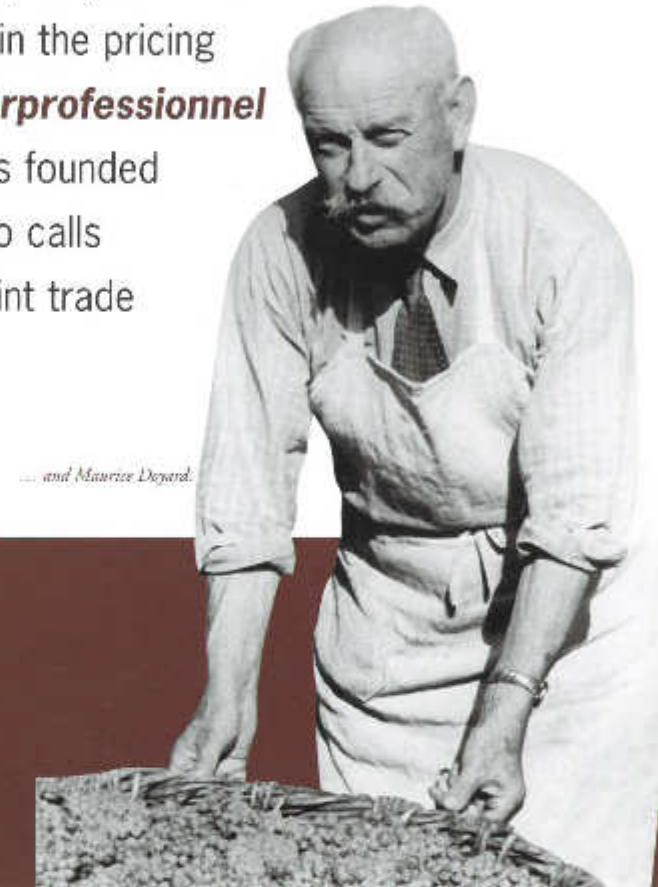
- Applied research and technical advice on viticulture and oenology

- Corporate communications
- Furthering the economic development and exclusivity of the appellation world-wide

Its mandate was to enforce quality standards and intervene as necessary in the pricing of grapes. The *Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne* was founded six years later in response to calls for a more rigorous joint trade association.



The two co-founders of the CIVC: Robert-Jean de Vogue....

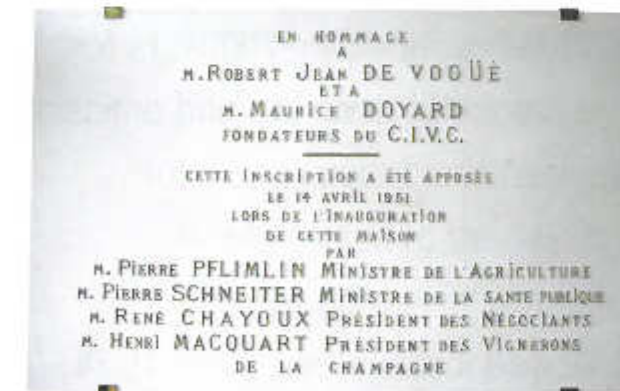


... and Maurice Doyard.

① **A joint trade association**

Following the crisis that had toppled the Champagne market in the 1930s, Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses felt the need to formalise their dialogue.

The first joint trade association, founded by government decree in 1935, was the *Commission de Châlons*.



The production process has come a long way since the first quality standards were established in 1927. **One major development** has been the regulation of harvesting dates.

Harvesting dates.

Traditionally the *ban des vendanges* or "Opening of the harvest" was the signal for pickers to set to work in vineyards throughout Champagne.

Then in 1970 it was decided to vary the start of the harvest so as to coincide with **peak ripening times** in the different regions. An observation network was set up by the AVC to monitor maturity in 440

selected plots. Since then, particular dates apply to the harvesting of **different crus and grape varieties.**



Newly-harvested grapes.



Pruning.



Tasting Champagne.



Ageing Champagne.

We have also seen tangible improvements in plant selection, the quality of pressed musts and methods of fermentation and ageing on lees.

Chronology of main Champagne quality rules

- 1935. Harvest yields, minimum alcohol content, *pressurage fractionné* (fractional pressing) and limited juice extraction, minimum 12-month ageing in bottle.
- 1938. Regulation methods of vine pruning.
- 1952. Regulations applying to vintage Champagne (wines

- produced exclusively from a single harvest; statutory three-year period of ageing in bottle commencing in the year following the harvest).
- 1978. Height, spacing and density of plantings (8,000-9,000 low-yield plants per hectare, optimum quality control) and training and pruning methods.
- 1984. Ban on the bottling of wines before 1 January following the harvest.

- 1991. Approval becomes compulsory for all pressing centres.
- 1993. Juice extraction is reduced to 102 litres per 160 kilos of grapes rather than 100 litres per 150 kilos.
- 1997. Minimum periods of ageing in bottle are extended to 12-15 months for non-vintage wines and three years for vintage wines, commencing on the date of bottling.

Compliance with specified production procedures is monitored by the INAO and the CIVC, with **samples** being taken at each stage of the production process.

INAO approval certifies that the characteristics of the wine in production are consistent with those of the appellation.

In 2001 the industry introduced quality follow-up activities based on random tastings of wines in the retail circuit by a body of 100 appointed tasters.

④ Protection of the Champagne appellation

The reputation and prestige of the Champagne appellation has long been a source of envy for other producers, spawning hundreds of imitations every year.

Some brands are easy to copy, but Champagne is a **unique product** born of **the shared heritage**



« Champagne Brus »



« Kola Champagne »



« Champagne toothpaste »

of Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses for whom defence of the appellation is vital. They also have a duty to **protect consumers** against misleading claims made for any wines, beverages or products that set out to usurp the reputation or undermine the guarantee of quality or origin of the Champagne appellation.

It is therefore **the policy of the CIVC and the INAO** to prosecute cases of illicit exploitation of the renown and identity of the Champagne appellation.

In 1960 a British High Court ruled against so-called “Spanish Champagne”, a sparkling wine distributed in Great Britain, so opening the way to legal action in defence of Champagne throughout countries under British jurisdiction. It also served as a useful deterrent to producers in other countries.

The campaign was subsequently expanded to address cases of indirect competition



The “Perrier” and “Elderflower” cases.

The first case involved a German publicity campaign for Perrier mineral water that unfairly exploited Champagne’s reputation with the slogan: “The Champagne of mineral waters”.

A more recent case involved a sparkling elderflower juice on sale in Great Britain in Champagne-shaped bottles with the words “Elderflower Champagne” on the label.



Dela' and Cantreus' "Champagne" biscuits

from **non-alcoholic beverages**, with successful prosecutions being brought against manufacturers.

The name Champagne is **so famous** that unfair use is not confined to the wines and spirits trade: witness the “Champagne” cigarette marketed by the SEITA. It was finally withdrawn after a three-year long battle by the CIVC that helped the INAO to pass vital legislation on **2 July 1990** protecting an AOC’s **reputation**.

In virtue of this law, the CIVC and the INAO won their case

against Yves Saint Laurent following the company's multinational launch of a perfume called "Champagne". One of the outcomes of the case was a ruling by the Paris Court of Appeal in 1993 confirming that use of the Champagne appellation was

exclusively reserved for wines originating and produced in Champagne.



According to the Law of 2 July 1990, a geographical name or any other reference denoting an *appellation d'origine* shall not be used in connection with any similar product

or any product whatsoever where such use is likely to **misappropriate or weaken** the reputation of an *appellation d'origine*.

Yves Saint Laurent's "Champagne" perfume.

Sevin's "Champagne" cigarettes.



Significant victories for the Champagne appellation.

Direct competition:
1960. Case against "Spanish Champagne" in London.
1972. Japan agrees not to use the Champagne appellation.

1973. Bilateral reciprocal protection agreement between France and Spain.
1974. Case against "Canadian Champagne" in Quebec.
Indirect competition:
1987. Case against Perrier mineral water in Germany
1994. Case against "Elderflower Champagne" in Great Britain

Misuse of reputation:
1984. Case against "Champagne" cigarettes in France.
1990. Case against "Schaumpagner Paris-Night" in Switzerland
1993. Case against "Champagne by Yves-Saint-Laurent" in France.
2002. Case against "Arla with the taste of Champagne" in Sweden.

At the same time, the CIVC and INAO with strong support from the EU promoted numerous **bilateral reciprocal protection agreements**. The challenge today is to negotiate **multilateral protection agreements** between all the Member States of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Since the creation of the Champagne AOC in 1935, Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses have taken their association from strength to strength, growing



Principal multilateral agreements

1891. Madrid Protocol (original Protocol member countries: Brazil, Spain, France, Portugal, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Tunisia).

1958. Lisbon Protocol: originally 16 Protocol member countries.
1994. Marrakech agreements, TRIPS (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property): signed by 130 Member States of the WTO.

bigger and better organised in a constant bid for improved efficiency and standing. Thanks to their vision and determination, the Champagne appellation enjoys an unprecedented reputation that acts as a powerful disincentive to fraud.



origins

*environmentally
friendly viticulture*

*benchmark
principles*

*sustainable
development*

*consumer
choice*

Contents

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- ② The drive for excellence
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The durability of the Champagne appellation depends on its ability to keep pace with modern times.

Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses operate in a fiercely competitive market that places increasing emphasis on the question of origin. As part of a continuing drive towards excellence, our priorities remain to conserve a *terroir* and a reputation that are the promise of performance.



Protecting the acarid predator, coccinellidae ("ladybird").

The principles of ecofriendly viticulture

First, observation and information gathering. Next, development of a rationale to guide methods of protection and production. Finally, and only where necessary, measured intervention.

① **Ecological conservation of the *terroir***

There is a quiet revolution at work in Champagne as vineyard after vineyard commits to **environmentally friendly viticulture**. It involves not so much new rules as a whole new way of thinking about every stage of wine-making, from plant to finished product. Its aim is to nurture respect for **our unique biosphere**: soil, air, water and the people who live and work there.

The people of Champagne are no strangers to these principles that were first introduced by the CIVC in the 1980s. They have virtually all been applied to-date and in due course will probably become part of the AOC's legislation.

At the heart of the scheme are some 15,000 Wine-Growers committed to a policy of **sustainable development**. With their support, Champagne



Laying diffusers containing insecticidal pheromones to confuse male insects.

is emerging as a major player in the global campaign for sustainable development based on agricultural production systems that are both economically and ecologically viable.

As part of this process, the criteria for **geographical demarcation** are now being re-examined with a view to further consultations leading to the revision of existing boundaries.

Ageing of vintage Champagne

The statutory period of ageing may be three years but most producers cellar their vintage Champagne for at least four years and sometimes ten years or more.

② The drive for excellence

The heirs to the Champagne appellation are the Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses who **share** in the reputation, added value, image and protected status of a prestige heritage. But these **privileges** carry **great responsibility**: the duty to conserve and enhance the Champagne appellation in accordance with quality-improvement regulations. In practice, the level of performance generally **far surpasses** AOC minimum specifications.



A Champagne cellar.

The drive for quality is a collective effort in Champagne, fuelled by a shared commitment to excellence at every level. As part of this process, a **major overhaul** of principal growing techniques (planting density, pruning, desuckering, tying-up, etc) is currently under way with a view to **incorporating** the updated methods in the AOC constitution. **Production conditions** are also being examined in light of changing weather conditions.

Last but not least, improved methods of **yield control** are being tested by research committees throughout Champagne.

Paths to glory.

Sponsorship: of culture and the arts, including music, sculpture, literature and films; sports, including major horse-riding and nautical events, motor shows and boat shows, golfing championships...

③ Universal renown

Champagne's image today is as vigorous as it ever was, thanks to a sustained promotional campaign by Wine-Growers and Champagne Houses that ranges from sponsorship and public relations activities to cellar visits



Close-up of effervescence.

Public relations activities: in association with major luxury goods manufacturers, fashion houses, design groups...
New product launches: to position Champagne as the wine of celebration and evening entertainment...
VIP visits: every year an impressive *cortège* of political, media and cultural figures are taken round the cellars of Champagne and invited into homes that still cherish the French art of living.

and welcome receptions. The consumer market is another important focus of attention. The industry as a whole participates in an international programme of activities aimed at introducing consumers to the **great wines** of Champagne. Topics range from the diversity, complex production process and taste of Champagne to menus proposed by some of the world's greatest *chefs* and *sommeliers*. There is a Champagne wine for **every type of cuisine** and every course, from the aperitif to the pudding.

As Champagne's reputation acquires **worldwide recognition**, the aim is to conquer new markets and especially to win acceptance in new cultures. The myth of Champagne must take root in countries like **China, India and Russia** (to name but the biggest). The people there must be encouraged to sample prestige wines in markets where wine consumption remains very limited or is already highly competitive.



A tasting session in Japan.

Co-chairmen Philippe Fournil and Yves Bèzeaud with top Lyon chefs in 1998.

The Japanese example

The Japanese have a culture unfamiliar with the world of wine but passionate about luxury, celebration and the art of living. **The myth of Champagne** has always aroused fascination in Japan, a country that today is home to an increasingly discerning group of committed **connoisseurs** and knowledgeable **consumers**.

The challenge for the Champagne industry is both cultural and commercial: the Champagne appellation must adapt to local cultures and win preference over superficially appealing mass-produced alternatives.

④ **The future of the concept of geographical origin**

The French AOC is the most developed version of Geographical Indication, but equivalent mechanisms now exist more or less everywhere.

In Europe geographical indications and designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs are protected by EU legislation passed on 12 July 1992 and



Vineyard parcels in Champagne.

Definition of Geographical Indication

"Indications which identify a good as originating in a territory, or a region

or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin."

known as the **PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)** and the **PGI (Protected Geographical Indication)**.

The United States has traditionally resisted the idea, but the concept of geographical origin is nevertheless gaining ground with the creation of approved wine growing areas called **American Viticulture Areas (AVA)**.

In Central and Southern America, China, Vietnam, India, Israel and elsewhere, Indications of Origin are increasingly used to identify products and enhance their authenticity and quality.

At the global level, the concept of **Geographical Indication** (GI) was defined by the TRIPS Agreement (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property) signed in 1994 by 130 Member Nations of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The TRIPS Agreement also calls for a means to protect consumers against misleading information regarding geographical origin, and to protect producers against unfair competition.

The European Union is currently lobbying the Member States of the WTO to support global PGI systems.

Initiatives that spring from two aspirations

- **One is the desire of traditional producers to anchor their ancestral expertise in their terroirs of origin, so maintaining activities that respect the environment and safeguard the livelihoods of generations of local populations.**

- **The other is the consumers' desire to conserve authentic landmarks; to strive for standards of quality that still value man and nature; to give preference to historic appellations that enhance the environment and the people who live there.**

The Champagne appellation symbolises a key choice made by society.

It has a fine future in store.



Champagne vines: canes trained along a wire framework.