



VIEILLES VIGNES FRANÇAISES

Details of Production: A unique phenomenon, Vieilles Vignes Françaises is produced with grapes coming from three very small pieces of land of Grand Cru which amount to just under 0.6 hectares (1.4 acres): 'Chaudes Terres' in Ay (0.6 acres), 'Clos St Jacques' in Ay (0.5 acres) and 'Roix Rouge' in Bouzy (0.3 acres). These were unaffected by the phylloxera which destroyed all the Champagne vineyards at the end of the 19th century. The vineyards were then re-grafted with American rootstocks. Les Vieilles Vignes Française miraculously escaped the devastation and therefore was not re-grafted. The continue to be planted 'en foule' in the historic, layered, self propagating method and thus perpetuate what can be called the 'remains of the days' of the Champagne region.

Vieilles Vignes Françaises is only produced from the cuvée. The first fermentation of the wines is done in oak casks. This ensures the development of more complex aromas and enhance the ageing potential of the wines, without imparting wood flavours. After blending, bottling, and second fermentation, the Vieilles Vignes Françaises 1999 matured for a minimum of five years on its lees, time necessary for the aromas to fully develop. This ageing in the bottle is done under a cork stopper, which ensures a better barrier against oxidisation than a crown cap. This method, unusual in champagne, guarantees the freshness and helps the aromas to keep their bouquet and neatness.

Blend of Grapes: 100% Pinot Noir.

How to Serve: Excellent with lobster thermidor and guinea fowl with wild mushrooms, and strong creamy cheeses such as Epoisses.

"One of the rarest and most expensive champagnes produced in exceptional vintages only. Made entirely from Pinot Noir from pre-phylloxera grapes harvested in a small walled vineyard.

This Blanc de Noirs of sumptuous quality and finesse that lasts for years."

Simon Field, GQ Magazine, 1 March 2007.