

# VEUVE CLICQUOT PONSARDIN



## VINTAGE RICH 2004

**The Vintage:** The climactic conditions for 2004 were ideal, characterized by low rain fall and drier weather with a healthier atmosphere than the previous years and few unfavourable incidents. The winter was mild overall despite quite severe frosts around the winter solstice. The spring was superb with only slight spring frosts causing very localised damage during the night of 15 April. July and August were warm with the occasional thunder storm and the threat of drought was kept at bay by some welcome rainy spells. There was then little more rain for the rest of September where sunny, windy conditions prevailed. This led to a rare concentration and exceptional ripeness of grapes with a potential alcohol content of 10.28% and total acidity of 7g/l (eq. H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>). Harvesting started on 12 September for the earliest plots and lasted through to 28 September for the latest.

**The Cuvée:** The Vintage Rich 2004 is made up of 60% Pinot Noir, 7% Pinot Meunier and 33% Chardonnay. The choice of grape classification is of vital importance. The blend includes 17 crus only, which are either Grand or Premier Crus.

These are located in the Montagne de Reims including Pinot Noir from Verzenay (Grand Cru) and Pinot Meunier from Ludes (Premier Cru), in the Grande Vallée de la Marne with Pinot Noir from Ay (Grand Cru) and in the Côte des Blancs where Le Mesnil-sur-Oger constitutes one of the best Chardonnay (Grand Cru) vineyards. A dose of 28 g/l of sugar was added.

**Sensory Notes:** The 2004 vintage has a pale gold colour with silver accents. It has a brilliant aspect and effervescence is lively and long-lasting.

At first, freshness immediately predominates, balsamic notes of menthol and liquorice, together with hints of citrus fruits coming to the fore. As the wine is agitated, fruitier aromas, including winter cherry, Mirabelle plums and grapefruit, follow, accompanied with a subtle hint of white flowers. After a few more minutes of aeration, typical "Veuve Clicquot" notes of dried fruit (almonds, hazelnuts) and pastries (brioche, marzipan) take the lead, crowned by a veil of sweet spices like vanilla.

In the mouth the wine is lively and firm, yet soft and velvety. The carefully chosen dosage provides a smooth elegant touch, with no sense of heaviness. In the mouth, the flavours confirm the wealth of notes perceived on the nose, with spicy fragrances resulting from the dosage. The finish is also contradictory, with a structure that is based both on freshness and smoothness.

This elegant, well-balanced wine will delight the palate for at least the next 15 years, and, already, from a culinary point of view, its double personality is extremely interesting. Its freshness is the perfect foil for Asian cuisine (fish with fruit) while its velvety facet marries beautifully with foie gras... Whatever the choice, spicy dishes can but enhance this delightful gastronomic wine.