



LOUIS ROEDERER
CHAMPAGNE

Cristal 2005

ORIGIN OF THE WINE

In 1876, Tsar Alexander II – already a great lover of Louis Roederer cuvées – asked Louis Roederer to ‘take the exercise still further’ and create a cuvée for his personal use which was unique, in terms of both its quality and the bottle. So Louis Roederer offered to produce an exceptional white crystal bottle, for which he concocted the finest selection from the vines of 7 great crus on his estate. This cuvée, made only from the ‘great’ years in which the ripeness of the Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes enabled a subtle, precise balance to be produced, was the first top-class cuvée of Champagne.

HARVESTS

The 2005 vintage was a year of marked contrasts between seasons and regions. Following a fairly harsh winter, 2005 had a mild spring with relatively warm temperatures all year long. There was above average sunshine and a slight water deficit, as had been the case throughout the dry cycle of 2005/2004 and 2003. The heat and humidity in July produced larger grapes and bunches, rather unusually for the Champagne region, while the cooler weather in August, followed by a very sunny month of September, led to favourable ripening in spite of heavy parasite pressure. The harvest dates were “typical” of those of the decade: September 12th for Chardonnays and the following day for Pinots Noirs.

STYLE

Precise, seductive and delicious, Cristal 2005 has a ‘slender’ and almost ‘living’ freshness. Thoroughly contemporary in terms of its harmony and immediate seductiveness, it nonetheless remains first and foremost a great classic of northern Champagne, combining freshness, energy and an almost chalky mineral quality. The Cristal hallmarks are evident: purity, precision and the unique harmony of flavours associated with the subtle power of our older vines, located on the finest Champagne Grand Cru terroirs.

ELABORATION

60% Pinot noir – 40% Chardonnay – 20% wines matured in wood (oak barrels) with weekly batonnage – no malolactic fermentation.

Cristal is made from grands crus from the Montagne de Reims, the Marne Valley and the Côte des Blancs. Matured for an average of 5 years in the cellars, it is left to rest for 8 months after disgorging to complete its maturation.

DOSAGE : adapted to each vintage, at between 8 and 10 g/l.

TASTING NOTES

Lively, uninterrupted bubbles, with a steady creamy flow.

An intensely elegant, rich, ripe bouquet. A succession of white fruits (apple), ripe and juicier yellow fruits (peaches) and slightly sour citrus fruits (mandarin oranges). The quite typical Chardonnay notes appear after a few minutes: white flowers (acacia), dried fruit, buttery caramel hints, suggestive of almost vanilla-like pastries. The bouquet is striking: it has great aromatic freshness but is already very open and mature.

The bite is full-bodied, soft and winy. It gives a well-rounded, almost smooth impression with ripe sun-drenched white and yellow fruits. The flavours are typical of Chardonnay: accessible, rich, fleshy fruit combined with warm, almost buttery hints. The measured bubbles and fresh limestone quality 'stretch' in the mouth, giving a pure, graceful impression. The finish is slightly tighter with a delicious, lingering, sensuous and almost sweet taste.

This Cristal 2005 stands out from all other Cristal vintages due to its aromatic openness and typical "Chardonnay" character. The ripe 2005 grapes produced wines of a unique nature, combining wininess with long-lasting quality, elegance and consistency. It is even reminiscent of a few Burgundy-like delights.