

American Sparkling Wines

Some Have French Champagne Makers Saying "C'est Bon!"

In my early twenties, growing up in America, I always heard that French Champagnes, Dom Pérignon, Cristal, Veuve Clicquot, Taittinger, etc..., were the only type of sparkling wine you needed to drink. They were considered the best tasting and utilized the best grapes and proper production methods. I had not had the chance to try them back then to formulate my own opinion.

I always heard that American Sparkling wines, were cheap imitations of what the French had created with Champagne. Some of this sentiment, could be attributed to the fact that, we as Americans didn't know any better,

had not had sophisticated palates and believed hype easily. OK, maybe that is being a bit harsh on us, but over the course of time, we always learned with sweat, guts, crafty thinking and ingenuity, that we can make things better.

Some examples of this; cars, computers, fine dining and yes... sparkling wine.

My goal for this article is to point out the American Sparkling wine makers who have made their mark on the global wine landscape. Also, to broaden the drinking choices and minds of those who believe now, like I believed many

years ago, that Champagne is the only choice for sparkling wine consumption and enjoyment.

Let's look at the different regions of the U.S. that produce some of the best sparkling wine there is. I have some from the typical places like, California, but also, from untypical places like, Virginia and New York.

First up, from the state of California

Schramsberg 2010 Brut Rosé \$39.99

Calistoga, California

75% Pinot Noir and 25% Chardonnay

Tasting notes: A decadent rosé. It beckons you to the glass. Aromas are of raspberry and toast. The palate enjoys citrus notes and some spice. Crisp and medium weighted. Well balanced



Mumm Napa 2007 DVX \$60.00

Anderson Valley, California

60% Chardonnay and 40% Pinot Noir

Tasting notes: Well crafted with minute bubbles and a resilient mousse. Hints of toast, with a silky, lush and rich mouth feel. Great acidity and long finish



Roederer Estate 2006 L'Ermitage \$39.99

North Coast, California

50% Chardonnay and 50% Pinot Noir

Tasting notes: The nose presents Ananas Reinette apple with hints of strawberries. Your palate enjoys nice acidity, with crisp flavors of lemon tart and camembert cheese, followed by a long finish of citrus.

Next up, from Virginia

Thibaut-Janisson NV Blanc de Chardonnay \$33.00

Charlottesville, Virginia

100% Chardonnay

Tasting notes: Aromas of pear and Macintosh apples abound when you get your nose in the glass. The palate gives up a well balanced combination of peach and apple flavors. It's crisp and light with a memorable finish.

Lastly, from the great state of New York

Sparkling Pointe Brut \$30.00

Southold, NY

56% Chardonnay, 32% Pinot Noir 12% Pinot Meunier

Tasting notes: Wafting out of the glass is a nose of apples and pears. Well formed small bubbles are noticed. The palate reveals a nice crispness, with good complexity flavors of biscuit and baked apple linger and give away to a long finish.



So, now you have an idea of great affordable sparkling wines to choose from. Yes, it may take a bit of searching for some of these wines, but you can ask your local wine shop to carry them. Next time you are having a special occasion, give one of these sparklers a try.

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