

asian sommelier guide 2010

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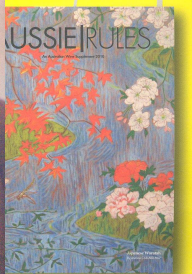
Results of the 2010 Macquarie Group Sydney Royal Wine Show

The Evolving Situation at Champagne Jacquesson



LACCI

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In late 2013, Champagne Jacquesson will release, for the first time, a late disgorgement of the non-vintage Cuvée 733 (which base wine – 78% – is of the 2005 vintage, see Tasting Notes on next page). A total of 15,000 bottles and 900 magnums will be available to the world.

"In 1988, after discussing with our father, my younger brother Laurent and I took over management of Jacquesson. We changed everything. We sold vineyards in poor location and bought new ones in good sites. But they had to be in those villages where we were already farming. We wanted to control quality," informed Jean-Hervé CHICQUET, partner of Champagne Jacquesson.

Annual production at the Dizy based house in the Marne Valley is just 300,000 bottles, less than 1% of powerhouse Moët & Chandon which rolls out about 35 million bottles a year.

Jacquesson is something of a control freak. It presses all 100% of its entire production, farming 30 hectares of vineyards which represent about 75% of its production. About half of the vineyards is owned by Jacquesson and the other half on long-term leases of 30 years (when 18 years is the industry norm). Jacquesson also buys grapes from another 10 hectares worth of vineyards.

"In order to establish a proper relationship with the grower, you have to buy the fruit when they need you, and not only when you need them. It's very important to have loyalty. This loyalty includes taking proper care of their grapes to make good wines. I think they, the growers, are proud to sell to Jacquesson."

The source of the fruit to make Jacquesson champagne comes from three Grand and three Premier Cru villages. These are:

Aÿ – Grand Cru
Avize – Grand Cru
Oiry – Grand Cru
Dizy – Premier Cru
Hautvillers – Premier Cru
Mailly-sur-Aÿ – Premier Cru

Fermentation is done almost entirely in big, old oak casks. After that, comes a series of "Nos". There's no racking after fermentation, no cold stabilisation, no filtering and, practically no fining. The finished wine stays on their gross lees for about four months.



"The truth is if we didn't change, I wouldn't be here because what we make at Jacquesson, the wines are made for the two best customers of the house, my brother and I. We make wines that we ourselves would like to drink," Jean-Hervé Chicquet.

BETWEEN 2000 AND 2003

"Between 2000 and 2003, my brother and I completely changed the wines we produced. We've always felt it a privilege to be born in a terroir that makes great wine. We didn't change the wines to make life easy or difficult for journalists who may find it hard to keep up with what was happening."

So, instead of making a standard non-vintage wine that is supposed to be the same every year (if such a thing was possible in the first place), Jacquesson started numbering their non-vintage champagne.

"Every batch has a number in our battling book. When we started, the number was 728 (68% of the wine was from the 2000 vintage). The number is a "warning" that the wine has changed. The back label provides information on the wine which can also be found on our website www.champagnejacquesson.com, including the

number of bottles produced for the particular batch or cuvée.

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Champagne Jacquesson never uses, and always sells, the second pressings of the juice to other producers. When the quality of the first pressing is not up to scratch, Jean-Hervé and Laurent Chicquet have no hesitation to also sell that away. So, for the 2009 vintage, they sold 40% of the juice, and 20% in 2006. Jean-Hervé Chicquet rates 2007 as 'very good' and 2008 as 'the best wine we've made at Jacquesson'.

Starting from the year 2002, assuming the vintage is considered good enough, Jacquesson will

THE CONTINUING EVOLUTION AT CHAMPAGNE JACQUESSON

While older vintages and other Champagne Jacquesson wines are still available on the market, since 2002, the House of Jacquesson only produces four single vineyard wines (not in every year and, some years, only one, two or three of them, not all four) and one single non-vintage cuvée marked by a number.

STORY & PHOTOS BY CHING POH TIONG

put aside a maximum of 10% of production to make four single vineyard wines.

"The reason for this is because we carried out some experiments in 1995, 1996 and 2000 and we have been impressed with these vineyards. We will not necessarily make these single vineyard wines every year. The have to be good in the first place. And also, the wine must not be needed in the blend for the non-vintage cuvée," Jean-Hervé Chicquet elaborated.

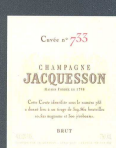
The four vineyards are:

- Aÿ Vauzelle Terme, Grand Cru, Pinot Noir
- Avize Champ Cain, Grand Cru, Chardonnay
- Dizy Come Bautray, Premier Cru, Chardonnay
- Dizy Terres Rouges, Premier Cru, Rosé, blend of Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier

The vintage single vineyard wines made so far are:

- 2002 – All four single vineyard wines
- 2003 – Only Dizy Terres Rouges Rosé
- 2004 – All four single vineyard wines
- 2005 – Three single vineyard wines, namely Aÿ Vauzelle Terme, Avize Champ Cain & Dizy Come Bautray
- 2006 – None produced
- 2007 – Two single vineyard wines, namely Dizy Terres Rouges Rosé & Dizy Come Bautray
- 2008 – All four single vineyard wines
- 2009 – Champagne Jacquesson informs that all four single vineyards should be produced

TASTING NOTES



JACQUESSON CUVÉE NO 733
(78% from the 2005 vintage)
★★★★
Bright straw. On the nose, nutmegs, dried citrus peel, ripe apples, spices. Minerality with a citrus skin finish. Slightly creamy, yet firm. Medium-plus bodied. A blend of 52% Chardonnay, 24% Pinot Noir and 24% Pinot Meunier.



JACQUESSON CUVÉE NO 734
(73% from the 2006 vintage)
★★★★
Disgorged in October 2009. Cuvée No 734 is the latest non-vintage series. Big, rich and riper than Cuvée No 733, the blend is 54% Chardonnay, 26% Pinot Meunier and 20% Pinot Noir.



JACQUESSON AVIZE GRAND CRU 2000 ★★★★★
Bright straw with light green lights. Very marzipan/almond paste on the nose. Intensely dried lemons on the palate. Rich, ripe, big and full-bodied. Viscous. Spiced. Exotic. The fruit comes from three plots of a 11-hectare vineyard. This is the last Avize Grand Cru made at Jacquesson.

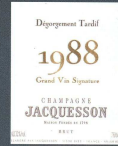


JACQUESSON AVIZE GRAND CRU 1995 ★★★★★
Honey, apples and beewax. Minerally too. With intensity, length and freshness. Impressive. A great blanc de blancs.

JACQUESSON 2000 ★★★★★
Bright straw. Nutmegs, ripe citrus/grapefruit with a whiff of mushrooms and sandalwood. Intensity and length. Firm and quite dry. An equal blend of 50% Chardonnay and 50% Pinot Noir.



JACQUESSON DIZY TERRES ROUGES ROSE 2004 ★★★★★
Dull ruby. Produced from the bleeding or saignée method rather than blending red with white wine. Accordingly expect colour variation in this wine of different vintages. Maceration of juice and skins is between 12 and 18 hours. The fruit comes from an eight-hectare vineyard, planted half/half to Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Cherries/raspberries on the nose. Ripe, rich and creamy. A wine rather than a champagne, let alone a delicate rosé. Full-bodied and structured, complete with tannins. Dry. Made from a blend of 71% Pinot Meunier and 29% Pinot Noir.



JACQUESSON DT GVS 1988 ★★★★★
"DT" stands for "Degorgement Tardive" or "Late Disgorgement". "GVS" signifies Grand Vin Signature. Bright pale yellow. Ripe citrus/minerally/cinnamons/spiced. Very complete and incredibly fresh on the nose – very dried lemons – finish. Disgorged in the third quarter of 2009. This was the first wine that brothers Jean-Hervé and Laurent Chicquet made together.

THE CHINESE BORDEAUX GUIDE, THE WINE REVIEW & ASIAN SOMMELIER GUIDE RATING SYSTEM
★★★★★ Outstanding ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★ Good
★★ Average ★ Acceptable ★ Half Star