

Champagne Louis Roederer

Initially founded as Dubois Père & Fils in 1776, which passed into hands of Nicolas-Henri Schreider who, in 1827, sought the assistance of his nephew Louis Roederer. The latter took over when his uncle died in 1833, and the house became known as Louis Roederer.

240 hectares own vineyards which provide two-thirds of the grapes required for the wines

Total production around 3'500 000 bottles per year

100% organic / biodynamic

CEO & President, Frédéric Rouzaud

Chef de caves / Chef du vignoble/ Executive Vice-President, Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon

Unlike most of the *grande marques*, Roederer is family owned and remains on the smaller end of things relative to its peers. There is a decidedly human scale at Roederer that isn't always evident in Champagne. Cristal boasts a rich lineage that goes back to 1876, when Czar Alexander II asked Roederer to create a special luxury cuvée bottled in clear crystal.

In 1971, proprietor Jean-Claude Rouzaud, who made the wines at the time, began experimenting with a Rosé version of Cristal. The first commercial release, the 1974, followed a handful of years later.

Unlike most other *grande marque* Champagnes, Cristal Rosé has been made from the same 100% estate owned vineyards from the beginning, which is one of the reasons the wines follow such a precise stylistic line from vintage to vintage. The typical blend is around 55% Pinot Noir and 45% Chardonnay. The Pinot Noir emerges from the lieu-dits Bonotte Pierre Robert and Gargeotte in Aÿ, and is vinified with light skin contact (*saignée*), which is unusual among *grande marque* Rosés, most of which are made from blending still Pinot into a base blend. The Chardonnay is sourced from Montmartin in Mesnil-sur-Oger and in Pierre Vaudon in Avize.

Biodynamic trials started in Champagne in 2000. The Chef de Cave Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon took some of his larger vineyards and divided them into parcels of equal size farmed according to conventional, biologic and biodynamic principles. Many of those trials are ongoing. By 2006, all of the Pinot Noir for Cristal Rosé came from biodynamically farmed vineyards, while the 2007 is the first Cristal Rosé made entirely from biodynamically farmed fruit. Lécaillon observes that the main takeaway from vineyard trials is that fruit from the biodynamic parcels is much more aromatic, while sugar ripeness is achieved earlier, and therefore, with higher levels of acidity and lower pHs than in the past. The non-malo style, along with a focus on biodynamics has led to wines that have a tendency to be reductive in the cellar. As a result, winemaking has evolved and the musts are aerated more often than before to make sure the wines are getting enough oxygen during vinification. Cristal Rosé is mostly fermented and aged in steel, although about 15-20% of juice, usually Chardonnay, sees some oak.

The house owns also :

Champagne Deutz

Roederer Estate, Scharffenberger Cellars and Domaine Anderson (California)

Ramos-Pinto (Porto)

Domaines Ott (Provence), Délas Frères (Rhône)

Château Pichon Lalande Comtesse de Lalande, Château de Pez, Château Haut-Beauséjour

Import Switzerland

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CEO Martin Barak