

LES ALLIES BLANC DE BLANCS BRUT

NV/\$11.99



DESCRIPTION

Sparkling wine might just be the most technical of all wines in the world. The reason most sparkling wine is so complex is because of the need for two fermentations; one to make wine and the other to make bubbles. Since sparkling wines were first introduced (starting in the mid 1500's), several processes have been developed and each result in a unique sub-style of sparkling wine. Take a look at the major sparkling wine production methods and which wines are made with each technique.

How Sparkling Wine is Made

There are 6 major methods by which sparkling wines are produced, each resulting in a different carbonation level and, ultimately, a different style of bubbly! We'll discuss all the styles, but the two worth paying attention to the most are Traditional Method (used for Champagne, etc) and Tank Method (used for Prosecco, etc).

- Traditional Method
- Tank Method
- Transfer Method
- Ancestral Method
- Continuous Method
- Carbonation

Sparkling wines have different pressure levels which affect our perception of their taste. The higher the pressure, the more fine the bubbles.

Traditional Method

The traditional method of sparkling winemaking was awarded a UNESCO heritage in Champagne in 2015. It is—arguably—the most appreciated method for sparkling wine production in terms of quality, and at the same time it is also the most costly in terms of production. The most important facet of the traditional method is that the transformation from a still to a sparkling wine occurs entirely inside the bottle.

1. **Base Wine or “Cuvée”:** grapes are picked (usually just a tinsy bit younger to preserve acidity) and fermented into a dry wine. The winemaker then takes the various base wines and blends them together into what the French call a “cuvée”, which is the final sparkling wine blend.
2. **Tirage:** Yeast and sugars are added to the cuvée to start the second fermentation and wines are bottled (and topped with crown caps).
3. **2nd Fermentation:** (inside the bottle) The second fermentation adds about 1.3% more alcohol and the process creates CO₂ which is trapped inside the bottle thus carbonating the wine. The yeast dies in a process called autolysis and remain in the bottle.
4. **Aging:** Wines are aged on their lees (the autolytic yeast particles) for a period of time to develop texture in the wine. Champagne requires a minimum of 15 months of aging (36 mos for vintage Champagne). Cava requires a minimum of 9 months of aging but requires up to 30 months for Gran Reserva Cava. Most believe the longer the wine ages on its lees, the better.
5. **Riddling:** Clarification occurs by settling the bottle upside down and the dead yeast cells collect in the neck of the bottle.
6. **Disgorging:** Removing sediment from bottle. The bottles are placed upside down into freezing liquid which causes the yeast bits to freeze in the neck of the bottle. The crown cap is then popped off momentarily which allows the frozen chunk of lees to shoot out of the pressurized bottle.
7. **Dosage:** A mixture of wine and sugar (called Exposition liqueur) is added to fill bottles and then bottles are corked, wired and labeled.

Tank Method

The tank method came about during the industrial advancements made in the early 20th century and is the main process used for Prosecco and Lambrusco wines. The major difference between the tank method and the traditional method is the removal of the individual bottle as the vessel used to turn a still wine into a sparkling one. Instead, base wines are added together with the sugar and yeast mixture (Tirage) into a large tank. As the wine has a second fermentation, the CO₂ released from the fermentation causes the tank to pressurize, whereafter wines are then filtered, dosed (with Expedition liqueur) and bottled without aging. Tank method sparkling wines have a much more freshly made character with stronger secondary (yeasty) flavors. Some may argue that the tank method is not as high-quality of a production method as the traditional method of sparkling wine. While the process is more affordable (and thus is popular with lower quality wines), it is still used for fine sparkling winemaking.

Transfer Method

This method is identical to the Traditional method except that wines need not be riddled and disgorged in the same manner. Instead, the bottles are emptied into a pressurized tank and sent through pressurized filters to remove the dead yeast bits (lees). Then, the wines are bottled using pressurized fillers. You'll find this method used most commonly for non-standard sized bottles (splits or jerobaum and above).

Ancestral Method

This method of sparkling wine production uses icy temperatures (and filtration) to pause the fermentation mid-way for a period of months and then wines are bottled and the fermentation finishes, trapping the CO₂ in the bottle. When the desired level of CO₂ is reached, wines are chilled again, riddled and disgorged just like the traditional method, but no expedition liqueur (sugar) is added. The technique is referred to as the Ancestral Method because it's assumed that this is one of the earliest forms of sparkling winemaking.

Méthode Dioise Ancestrale: This variant of the Ancestral Method empties the wines into a pressurized tank and filters instead of riddling and disgorging.

Carbonation

The carbonation method simply takes a still wine and carbonates in a pressurized tank. While it's possible that this method has benefits, at the moment the only carbonated wines are lower quality bulk wines. Still, if you've ever drunk New Age on the rocks, while sitting outside in the sun, you might feel it was quite alright after all (BTW, New Age is a carbonated sweet white wine blend of Torrontés and Sauvignon Blanc).

Continuous Method

The Russians may have it with the strangest sparkling wine production method yet! The process gets the name from a continual addition of yeast into pressurized tanks thereby making it possible to increase the total pressure to 5 atmospheres (or as much as most Champagne). Wines are then moved into another tank with yeast enrichments (sometimes wood shavings) which the dead yeast bits attach to and float around in the wine. This gives the wines a similar-tasting autolytic character to the traditional method. Finally, the wines move into the last set of pressurized tanks where the yeasts and enrichments are settled out, leaving the wine relatively clear.

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This wine is 100% Chardonnay.

Tasting Notes

Nose:

Pale yellow color with golden hints. Aromatic and delicate nose with yellow fruit notes and dried fruits aromas.

Palate:

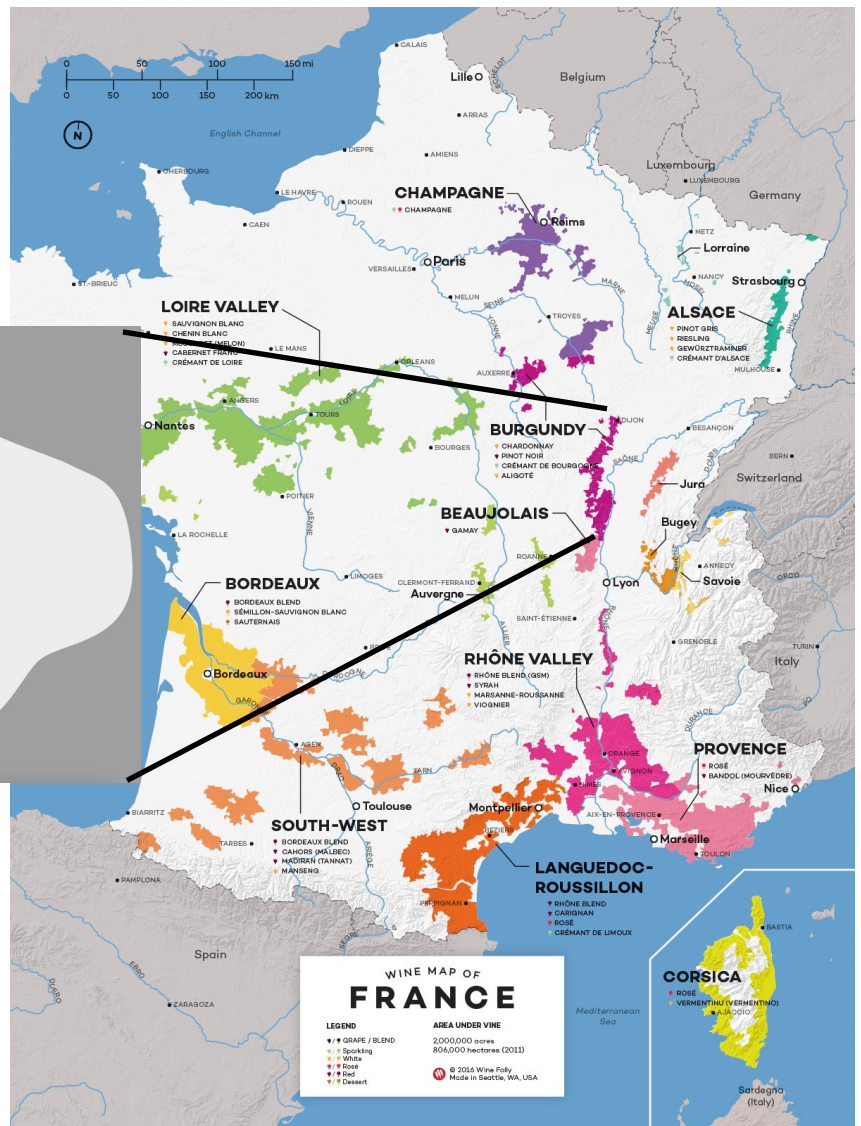
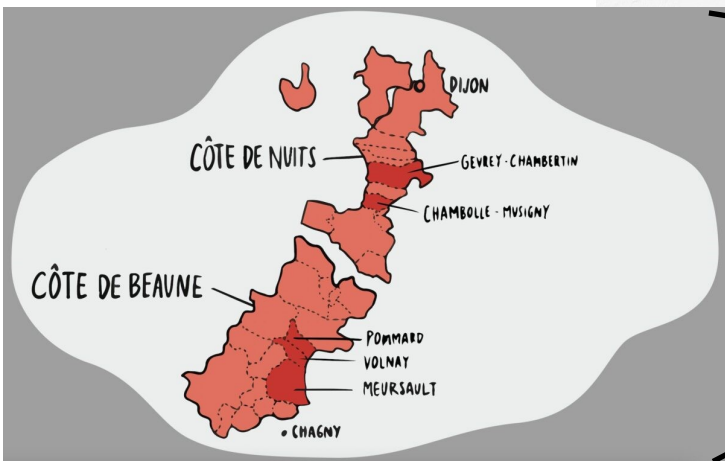
Numerous fine bubbles and a persistent foam. Graphite and spice accents lace this tightly meshed, mouthwatering Sparkling, with vibrant acidity swathed in a fine and silky mousse, carrying flavors of ripe melon, lemon sorbet, toasted brioche and mineral notes. An elegant wine, well balanced and very pleasant. The aftertaste is long and refreshing.

Pairing:

Ideal as an aperitif, as a cocktail, or with desserts.

Winery Website: [Our wines - Tri-Vin Imports, Inc | Wines](#)

Bourgogne Côte d'Or A.O.P., Burgundy, France



Cote d' Or is made up of Cote de Nuit & Cote de Beaune in the Burgundy region of France.