

TheWineBuzz®



♣ **New! Pull-Out Holiday Beverage Buying Guide** ♣

♣ **Annual Holiday Gift and Dining Guide** ♣

Bartenders' Favorite Holiday Cocktails • Ohio Ice Wine • Whisky

Tasting Notes: Champagne and Sparkling Wine • Wine and Dine in Buffalo

Grape Destinations: Ski and Spa • News, Reviews, Craft Beer, Recipes and More!

Bubbles Make Us Happy!

All the more reason to enjoy them during the holidays. (Though we are firm believers that sparkling wine is a food group unto itself that is essential for well-being throughout the year.) Our tasters sampled a couple of dozen champagnes and sparkling wines to make their recommendation for festive sparklers to enhance your holiday season. Within each category, where wines have varying sugar levels, we have arranged them dry to sweet. Here's to you!



Photo by Jean-Marie Lecomte. Courtesy CIVC

Highly Recommended Champagne

Pol Roger Pure Brut; \$64.99

Beautiful fine mousse and layered aromas of orange blossoms, Japanese plum, bread dough and vanilla; clean, refreshing and palate waking, with lively, bright tart apple and citrus flavors.

Ayala Brut Majeur; \$52.99

Refined aromas of toast, nuts and a whiff of coffee bean; vibrant and beautifully complex with notes of stone fruit and lemon meringue; reverberating, mouth-coating finish.



Henriot Brut Souverain; \$45

Beautiful pear skin, bread dough and orange blossom aromas; bright, yeasty character, very rich but silky, with toasty, mineral notes and flavors of lime zest, apricot and Asian pear.



Laurent-Perrier Brut; \$54.99

Nutty hazelnut aroma with hints of toast and cherry vanilla; elegant and refined with silky texture and toasty, nutty overtones. Just right.

Laurent-Perrier, 1999; \$70

Aromas of toasted walnuts, rising bread dough and vanilla; beautiful toasty flavor laced with a bit of crème brûlée; incredible, ongoing, textured finish. (Not available in Ohio)

Pol Roger Brut Reserve "White Foil"; \$47.50

Hints of brioche, Irish butter and sweet lemon drop on the nose; palate engulfing, with rich, clean warm vanilla, apple and pear flavors; lingering nutty, toasty finish.

Laurent-Perrier Cuvée Rosé Brut; \$119.99

Aromas of rose petals, fresh berries and vanilla; delicate mousse and exquisite creamy texture with flavors of currants, strawberries and persimmons. Immaculate.

Henriot Rosé; \$65

Bread dough, fresh strawberries and a touch of cinnamon on the nose; flavors of fresh berries, honeysuckle and toast, with a lovely bread, floral finish. Delicious.

Pol Roger Rich; \$64.99

Seductive aromas of brioche, honey and caramel; luscious and delectable on the palate, with rich, complex, honeyed caramel flavors with notes of fresh pear and apple tart. Opulent and elegant.

Highly Recommended California

Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs, 2006 (North Coast); \$29.99

Lovely delicate lemon/lime aroma with hints of honey and vanilla; very effervescent and quite vibrant on the palate, with bright, tart fruit and undercurrents of toast.



Schramsberg Blanc de Noirs, 2006 (North Coast); \$34.99

Delicate aromas of citrus and honey underscored by minerals; fresh, lively and vivid on the palate, with notes of orange zest, honey and spice.

Schramsberg Reserve, 2002; \$105

Freshly kneaded bread dough and toasted almonds on the nose; creamy, rich and opulent with big toastiness and lovely hints of cherry skins and vanilla flan.

Schramsberg J. Schram, 2002; \$90

Beautiful complex aromas of raspberries, white cherries, pear skin, brioche and vanilla; full of flavor, with notes of lemon meringue, yeast and a bit of caramel; steady, elegant, exceptional finish.



Recommended - Champagne

Ayala Zero Dosage; \$59.99

Vanilla, toast and bread dough aromas; very lively, bright, tart and lemony. Wraps around your tongue and hangs on.

Laurent-Perrier Ultra Brut; \$85

Very fine mousse with yeasty brioche aroma overlaid on white cherries and caramelized pear; light, delicate style, bright clean and gently toasty with a nice steely edge. (Not available in Ohio)

Laurent-Perrier Grand Siècle; \$249.99

Pear, brioche, mushrooms and spice on the nose; creamy, with lots of toast and a stony minerality underlying lush stone fruit and orange blossoms.

Henriot Blanc Souverain; \$55

Toasty, yeasty aroma with a whiff of coconut and flowers; insistent mousse and rich, creamy texture with flavors of hazelnuts, orange peel and toast. Elegant.

Henriot Brut Millesime 1998; \$95

Very toasty, yeasty aroma with a touch of earth; rich and full, creamy and toasty with figgy caramel-toffee notes and a palate-coating finish.

Recommended - Italy

Torre Ducco Blanc de Blancs Franciacorta Brut DOCG; \$26.99

Yeasty, toasty brioche aroma; luscious crème brûlée flavors with hints of pear, peach and fig; dry, clean, nutty finish.

Conti Ducco Franciacorta Brut DOCG, 2003; \$41.99

Very appealing aroma – warm, toasty, yeasty with a bit of toffee and clean minerality; rich and creamy on the palate, complex and flavorful, with notes of spice and caramel.

Vigne Regali Principessa Perlante Gavi DOCG; \$17

Floral, kiwi, lemon/lime and mineral aromas; refreshing, fruity and pleasant, with melon and lime flavors; fruity, lasting finish.

Torre Ducco Noir de Noirs; \$26.99

Deep ruby red, with black currant, black cherry aroma; rich and concentrated, slightly sweet, with notes of mission figs, prunes and dried berries.

Vigne Regali Rosa Regale Brachetto d'Acqui DOCG; \$21

Bright strawberry color, with luscious aroma of plums, red raspberries and currants; bright, fresh, sweet berry flavors with a touch of cocoa; sweet, lush finish.

Prices may vary.