

Roederer Launches Brut Nature 2006

By Liz Palmer



Louis Roederer Champagne, known for its tête du cuvée Cristal, has launched its first new cuvée “Brut Nature 2006” in more than 40 years. This non-malolactic, zero dosage vintage champagne was unveiled by Roederer’s Chef de Caves, Jean-Baptiste Lecaillon, during launch events during October and November 2014 in Toronto, New York, Paris and London.

The new cuvée was created in collaboration with world-renowned French designer, Philippe Starck and is the first non-dosage for Louis Roederer.

According to Lecaillon, his team carried out a series of bottling trials for 2003, 2004, and 2005 (extra-brut cuvées – 3-6g/l of sugar). These wines were fine-tuned and culminated in the selection of the 2006 vintage and marked the birth of Louis Roederer Brut Nature.

“Before 2003 we didn’t have the raw materials...the grapes, the terroir, sufficient ripening with this texture—the natural ingredients that would allow us to go further with [lowering the dosage] in Roederer’s non-malolactic style.” “The land and soil are the keys to great wines” says Lecaillon in between sips of champagne.

The 2003 growing season was ideal – it was an excessively warm, sunny and a dry year. The grapes come from 10 hectares of south-facing, biodynamically-farmed vineyards in Cumieres. Lecaillon says “You have a higher ripeness with biodynamics, different texture and fruit,” he said. “This wine might not have been possible without biodynamics.”

Lecaillon further states that all the grapes were picked on the same day and pressed together ‘I didn’t want any varietal taste. The idea was to eliminate the varietal characters and let the terroir speak’.

The grapes were picked much riper than usual and as a result, the lower sugar level of the wine-making process was altered. Fifty percent of the wine was aged in 9,000 litre oak casks and bottling at the lower pressure of 4.5 atmospheres versus the widely used 6 aided the wine’s texture. “Pressure and texture interact,” explained Lecaillon. “If you’re too high in pressure, you lose the texture.”

‘This is a small production with



60,000 bottles. The next warm year to expect a no-dosage cuvee will be the 2009 vintage’ says Lecaillon.

Brut Nature 2006 contains 56% Pinot Noir with equal parts Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier.

“The Brut Nature 2006 cuvée is the fruit of several convergences: between a historic terroir and a remarkable year, and between a Champagne House that respects nature and a creative genius with a free spirit.” Frédéric Rouzaud, Managing Director of Champagne Louis Roederer.

It’s a very good Champagne – definitely for foodies and sommeliers!

Tasting Notes:

Brut Nature 2006

This cuvée is ample, elegant, and pure.

The deep golden color with lively bubbles.

Layers of fruit with hints of lemon peel, pear, flowers with some hints of hazelnut and spice.

On the palate – stones, fruit, mineral freshness with a creamy texture, with a long powerful finish.

Other Champagnes Tasted:

Brut, Blanc de Blancs, 2008

Pale yellow with active bubbles and soft effervescence.

Roasted nuts, orchard fruits, with

white flower aromas.

On the palate – elegant and fresh with a creamy texture, refined acidity with hazelnut, slight minerality with a long finish.

Brut Vintage 2007

Pale gold with lively bubbles and soft effervescence.

Toasty, apple, pear, hazelnut, and vanilla aromas.

The palate is characteristic of Roederer’s vintages with the attack being ample and dense with apple, pear, subtle citrus, almond, white chocolate and caramel flavors, ending with a long finish.

Brut Rose Vintage 2008

Salmon color with active tiny bubbles.

Intriguing complex red fruits, orange peel, subtle spice, floral with chalk aromas.

On the palate – full-bodied, creamy, well structured, cherry, raspberry, orange peel, some spice flavors with some minerality ending with a Long finish.

Cristal 2006

Pale gold color with plentiful lively bubbles.

Layered aromas of lemon, orange and toasted nut aromas, followed by apple, peach, ginger and mineral aromas.

On the palate – creamy delicate mousse with some pear, apple, citrus zest flavors and spicy notes, with

some minerality, ending with a long finish.

Cristal 2002

This 12-year-old wine comes from 30-year-old vines.

Brilliant yellow with some amber highlights.

A beautiful mousse with fine beads Intense and delicate on the nose, revealing hints of Biscuit, honey, cocoa, toasted hazelnuts and candied citrus.

On the palate – savory explosion of ripe fruit on the attack, revealing red fruit, white chocolate, caramel and pastry.

Intense, powerful, beautiful balance with a long finish.

Cristal 1995

Tasting this was another special treat – there is only a few hundred bottles left in the world.

This 19-year-old wine has been 10 years on lees.

“Time on lees is powerful and important” says.. says Lecaillon Bottles were opened two hours before serving in order for them to breathe. Light golden color with a very strong mousse, with lively bubbles. Deep, yeasty aromas which are dominated by toffee, butterscotch and toast.

Fresh in the mouth, with hints of yellow fruits, strawberry and toasty flavors.

Finishes long and lean with some mineral.