

Wine & Spirits

DECEMBER 2018

YEAR'S BEST CHAMPAGNES

Our blind panels tasted 311 new-release Champagnes over the past 12 months. Joshua Greene rated 137 as exceptional (90+) and 25 as Best Buys. We present the wines by house, accompanied by background information.

91
POINTS

Récoltant-Manipulant in Chamery (Montagne de Reims) founded in 1862; owns 26,25 acres" 40% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay, 30% Petit Meunier; average age: 35 years; oldest vines: 72 years (pinot noir). Vigneron: Cyril Bonnet. 6,650 cases produced.

Bonnet-Ponson 2008 Premier Cru Les Vignes Dieu Brut Blanc de Blancs

This Chardonnay grows at a vineyard in Coulommès-la-Montagne, the vines planted in 1962. The thin topsoil is sandy clay, with bit of limestone eroding off bedrock. Half of the wine fermented in battels; all of it underwent malolactic, and yet the scent is delicate and fresh, with wildflower notes. There's a creaminess and toffee-like richness, even as the structure retains the steely tension of cool-season wine. Suited to further bottle age.



CHAMPAGNE



Bonnet - Ponson
1862

**Premier Cru Les Vignes Dieu
Brut Blanc de Blancs**



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