

## TERRY THEISE'S GREATEST CHAMPAGNES OF THE YEAR



Every year **Terry Theise** travels to Champagne and tastes over 150 wines with all 17 Growers in this portfolio. Terry brings amazing focus and deliberation to each and every wine; he tastes meditatively, taking meticulous notes on his impressions and the context and place that each wine speaks to. Terry's viewpoint opens a door to a different world of wine, one that does not disconnect this agricultural 'product' from its human and emotional element. Upon his return to the States, Terry writes his annual **Champagne catalog** with essays, anecdotes, and tasting notes on the 100 or so wines selected each year.

After tasting through all of the collections, Terry declares his short list of THE GREAT WINES OF THIS YEAR'S OFFERING. These are wines either clearly and obviously great, or wines that have soared above their category and therefore offer exceptional value.

**Pierre Gimonnet et Fils "Oenophile," non-dosé, 2008, because this offers stunning quality from such a bone-dry wine.**

"A really fine fragrance; about as grand as can be imagined. It has—as most such wines do—about 1.5g/l rs after 2<sup>nd</sup> fermentation—and what complexity, seamless balance, crushed oyster-shell, length, lemony splash and suave stoniness. It is exactly the Fleuron blend, without dosage.

**Marc Hébrart "Cuvée de Réserve" Brut, N.V. Otherworldly quality in the NV echelon.**

"The best edition of this wine in three years, and a candidate for wine of the offering. Given what went into it, this is amazingly tasty, winsome, clear, in the sweetest way angular, and leaves a deft finale of fruit fading to chalk; lingers and lingers. The empty glass smells of kiwi fruit and guava. So what did go into it? 52% 2012, 48% 2011-2010. 82% PN (unusually high) from Mareuil, Avenay Val D'Or and Bisseuil, and 18% CH from Mareuil. 92% free-run; just 8% taille of CH."

**Pehu-Simonnet Blanc de Noirs Brut, 2010 for sheer deliciousness and improbability, a wine that stunned us all.**

"All from the 2010 vintage and David Pehu's best wine to-date, a harbinger of things to come. It's 100% Les Pertois in Verzenay, 60% in barrel. It's wonderfully ripe and sumptuous and charming; floral aromas, really sensational fruit here and still delightfully and precisely reeking of Verzenay, all leading into a lip-smacking salty-herbal finish."

**Vilmart & Cie "Coeur de Cuvée" Brut 2007 not unexpected, but clearly the greatest wine in the offering.**

"This will continue Laurent's streak of making the best wine in Champagne from "difficult" vintages, and indeed this is as good as the GREAT 2001—and maybe better. It brings a nettle-y green sting to the magnificent grace and concentration of this ever-improving wine. The length is replete with pepper, leather and verbena; the salt and stocky savor are mind-bending—dried porcini, rare duck breast, clove and satsumas, all into a seemingly endless finish you want scoop back out of your mouth and drink again."