

Vilmart & Cie NV Cuvée Grande Réserve **90 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2018 – 2026

The NV Grande Réserve, a blend of 2015 and 2014 vintages, is a very pretty wine. Soft, understated and classy to the core, the Grand Reserve has so much to offer. Pear, spice, dried flowers and mint grace the palate in this exquisite, impeccably balanced Champagne. Above all else, the Grand Reserve impresses for its total sense of harmony and class. This is a great introduction to the Vilmart range. I loved it. Disgorged: June 2017. Dosage is 9 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie NV Cuvée Grand Cellier **92 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2018 – 2028

Vilmart's NV Cuvée Grand Cellier bristles with all the energy that makes the Vilmart Champagnes so compelling. Crushed rocks, lemon peel, white flowers, mint and dried flowers are all crystalline and finely cut. Medium in body, fresh and pulsating in its feel, the Grand Cellier is another winner from Vilmart. This release is based on 2014, with 50% reserve wines from 2013 and 2012. Disgorged September 2016. Dosage is 8 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie 2013 Cuvée Grand Cellier d'Or **93 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2018 – 2033

The 2013 Cuvée Grand Cellier d'Or shows the layered, vertical construction that is so typical of this wine. Deceptively medium in body, the 2013 is subtle and yet wonderfully complex. There is an airy, weightless quality to the 2013 that is impossible to miss. At the same time, all the layers of complexity and structure are present, they just speak in hushed tones. Citrus, floral and mineral notes are some of the signatures, but the Cellier d'Or is mostly a wine of textural finesse and nuance. Disgorged June 2017. Dosage is 7 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie 2010 Cœur de Cuvée **95+ pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2020 – 2030

The 2010 Cœur de Cuvée is marvelous. Deep, dense and powerful, the 2010 packs a serious punch. Slate, crushed rocks, white pepper, orchard fruit, mint and green pear give the 2010 its bright, vibrant personality. A hint of reduction adds freshness and complexity without being dominating. Laurent Champs nailed the vintage with this superb Cœur de Cuvée. The long, persistent finish is a thing of beauty. I can't wait to taste the 2010 with a little more bottle age. Even today, though, it is impressive, especially within the context of a year that had its share of challenges. Disgorged January 2017. Dosage is 7 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie 2008 Coeur de Cuvée (Magnum) **96 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2018 – 2028

The 2008 Coeur de Cuvée (magnum) is positively brilliant. It is also likely to require quite a bit of time to be at its very best. Even so, the 2008 shimmers with tension, energy and polish. Lemon confit, chalk, chamomile and white flowers are all finely cut in this chiseled, super-expressive edition of the Coeur de Cuvée. The 2008 boasts incredible fruit density and structure, with distinctly mineral and graphite notes that develop in the glass. In a word: dazzling! Unfortunately, there are just 395 magnums to go around. Disgorged November 2016. Dosage is 7 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie 2009 Cuvée Blanc de Blancs **96 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling white wine from France
Drinking window: 2019 – 2034

Here in its first release, the 2009 Blanc de Blancs Les Blanches Voies is positively stellar. Old vines confer remarkable power, gravitas and explosive energy, and yet the 2009 preserves remarkable freshness to play off the resonant, deeply layered fruit. Intense graphite, mineral, citrus and floral notes add myriad shades of nuance to an expansive, powerful Blanc de Blancs that hits all the right notes. The purity and vibrancy of the flavors here is simply striking. The Blanches Voies gets one more year on the lees than the flagship Coeur de Cuvée and also a dosage of just 4 grams per liter, the lowest ever in the history of Vilmart. The 2009 is positively stellar. Don't miss it! Production is just 2,400 bottles. Disgorged March 17.

Vilmart & Cie NV Brut Cuvée Rubis **93 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling rosé wine from France
Drinking window: 2018 – 2026

The NV Cuvée Rubis, a blend of 2014 and 2013, is unusually strict and severe. Those are not bad qualities at all, but this edition is especially focused and pulsing with energy. The cranberry, white flowers, grapefruit and white pepper notes are finely cut. In many years, I find the Cuvée Rubis to be airy and even a touch diffuse, but in this release, the wine is finely etched and sculpted, not to mention a huge overachiever. I loved it. The Rubis is 90% Pinot Noir (of which about 15% is still red wine) and 10% Chardonnay. Disgorged November 2016. Dosage is 9 grams per liter.

Vilmart & Cie 2011 Cuvée Grand Cellier Rubis **92 pts**

Rilly La Montagne, Champagne
Sparkling rosé wine from France

The 2011 Grand Cellier Rubis is a very pretty wine, with attractive hints of dried flowers, mint and dried cherry. In this tasting, the 2011 comes across as a bit compact, with the fruit pushed into the background and a slightly dry textural feel. It will be interesting to see if the wine gains a bit more mid-palate depth and body. At this stage, it looks like Laurent Champs successfully avoided the pitfalls of 2011, specifically the vegetal quality that afflicts so many wines. Even so, I would not push my luck with aging. Champs adds that 2003, 2007 and 2011 were all harvested in August, which is highly unusual in Champagne, but that in 2011 he waited an additional five days for the fruit to be as physiologically ripe as possible before he brought it in. The blend is 60% Pinot Noir (all saignée) and 40% Chardonnay. Disgorged January 2017. Dosage is 7 grams per liter.