



## Do you know Champagne ?

*By Marco Giovanetti*

<http://mtltimes.ca/how-much-do-you-know-about-champagne/>

Now that you are more familiar with Champagne, I can tell you about my producer that I recently got to know better. Recently, Francis Tribaut, the owner and cellar master of Lallier was in Montreal and I got to taste a pretty good range of their Champagnes available in the Quebec market. The invitation was a courtesy of their importer, Vins. Follow below for my favourite picks:

The Lallier family has been in the Champagne business for over 5 generations. Established in Ay, their holdings are in the best vineyards of Champagne ( Grand Cru) . Only 17 villages in Champagne can claim the coveted name of ‘Grand Cru’. Ay was one of the first to obtain it in 1936. Champagne Lallier use only Pinot Noir and Chardonnay for their ‘Grand Cru’ cuvees.

Lallier’s vision of Champagne is to nurture the complex nuances of Champagne ( secondary and tertiary aromas), and not too much on the fruity side. They practice extended elevage sur lattes. This technique concerns only the sparkling wines from Champagne and the Loire Valley. After fermentation, the wine is bottled with a small dose of sugar, so refermentation starts and carbonic gas is produced. The bottles are keep horizontally in wooden slats for a minimum of one year, so the Champagne gets their fine mousse that is so much appreciated for. This technique is required for all types of Champagne. It ranges from 12 months to 3 years for the vintage Champagnes.

The tasting started off with the Lallier Grande Réserve Grand Cru. Grapes are 65% pinot noir from Ay and Verzenay and 35% chardonnay from Avize and Cramant. Lovely with nuances of pain au levain, pear, roasted barley and hazelnut. Dry, voluminous with flavors of lemon brioche. Crispy and elegant, austere and earthy. Saline taste with a pristine structure. Gorgeous flavors of yellow apples and ground cherries. A gastronomical champagne. Perfect with a seafood platter or rich fish based salads such as couscous with seared tuna.



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Champagne Lallier

We continued with the powerful Lallier R012 N-Brut Nature ( Private Import), which has no sugar added. The blend is composed of 62% Pinot Noir and 38% Chardonnay from the 2012 vintage. Mind boggling nose bringing to mind chalk, grated lemon and lime peel. Very saline with a well developed mineral angle reminiscent of seaweed, iodine and soya. Energetic and structured with a nervy acidity. Chiseled and austere finale yet very refreshing Piquant finale. Pair it with charcuterie or smoked salmon. Definitely a must buy case for the Christmas holidays to come.

Off we went after with the Champagne Lallier Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru, 100% Chardonnay from Ay, this is one of the best Champagnes that money can buy at the SAQ. A peculiar Champagne quite earthy with nuances of white tea, chalk, and lactic nuances such as herbed cream cheese. In addition, ripe pineapple as well. Quite austere with a pronounced mineral profile. It actually feels like crumbling in your mouth. Very aerial and fine with marvelous power and concentration. A citric finale bringing to mind escabeche. Pair it with poultry cream dishes or pastas with cheese sauces.

Last but not least was the Lallier Vintage 2008 ( Private Import) was enticing with notes of Brioche ( Panettone), dry tropical fruits ( passion fruit, white grapefruit) and green apple. Dry and structured. Very elegant and quite smooth. Pairing perfectly on its own.



GRANDE RÉSERVE



R.012N



BLANC DE BLANCS



MILLÉSIME 2008



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