

CHAMPAGNE AYALA

October 4, 2023



Here is the brilliant new 2016 Blanc de Blancs by Champagne Ayala.

For years I have admired a Champagne house that remains under the radar. Champagne Ayala was founded back in 1860 and it was at that time that Edmond de Ayala, a Colombian by birth, settled in the Château d'Aÿ in 1850, where he began studying the Champagne business. Back then the château was owned by the Viscount of Mareuil, and it was he that taught Edmond what he knew. Edmond later married the Viscount's niece, whose dowry included both the Château and its vineyards and the brand was born.

Ayala currently produces both vintage and non-vintage wines as the brand is managed by Hadrien Mouflard, who formerly served as secretary general for Champagne Bollinger. The house is owned by Bollinger, as Caroline Latrive has been the chef de cave. The house was one of the founding members of the Syndicate des Grandes Marques back in 1882.

Just as I adored last year's wines, the new Ayala releases were fantastic across the board. Once again I was completely enamored by the NV Champagne Ayala 'Brut Majeur' Rose (OB, 93) which has a fantastic combination of weight and finesse with juicy red fruit flavors. Even better is the gorgeous 2016 Champagne Ayala 'Le Blanc de Blancs' (OB, 94) which is loaded with freshness and shows good aging potential. Learn more about this great historic house in champagne at <https://www.champagne-ayala.fr/en/our-heritage/> and here are my reviews of the beautiful wines by Champagne Ayala.

NV Champagne Ayala 'Brut Majeur' Brut- An outstanding value, the NV Champagne Ayala Brut Majeur is a blend of 70 crus from all of the Champagne region. Bright acidity lines this wine that offers lemon/lime flavors with chalky soils and shades of nectarine on the palate. Showing plenty of freshness and a soft mousse, this beauty will live on for another seven years to come. Drink 2023-2030- **91**

NV Champagne Ayala Brut Nature- The NV Brut Nature was stored for roughly four years en tirage. Mostly Chardonnay with smaller portions Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, this offers bright kumquat and lemon rind flavors that combine with salted peach and shades of ginger on the palate. Lithe and polished with a soft mouthfeel, enjoy now and over the next six plus years to come. Drink 2023-2028- **92**

NV Champagne Ayala Rose 'Brut Majeur' Champagne- Each vintage I taste the NV Champagne Ayala Rose 'Brut Majeur' Champagne I am so impressed with what they have captured here. This new edition combines equal parts Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier with the majority of the wine being Chardonnay. The wine was given 7 G/L dosage as this displays a dazzling sense of tension and excellent weight once on the mouth. Ripe red raspberry, blood orange zest and salmonberry notes combine with nutty and salty accents on the palate. Complex and delicious, no reason to cellar this beauty. Enjoy now and over the next eight to ten years. Drink 2023-2031- **93**

2016 Champagne Ayala Le Blanc de Blancs- The 2016 Champagne Ayala Le Blanc de Blancs is nearly all comprised of Chardonnay picked from three Grand Cru vineyards (Chouilly, Cramant and Le Mesnil-Sur-Oger). The wine was aged en tirage for six years before disgorgement. Very salty and showing brilliant terroir, crushed wet limestone and salty tones combine with ripe pear, and candied ginger on the palate. The weight really shows off nicely as this warm vintage wine will live on for another fifteen plus years to come. This is brilliant stuff to consume in its neryv youth. Drink 2023-2037- **94**