

FOOD & WINE

The Best High-End Champagne for When You Really Want to Treat Yourself



Sometimes, “good enough” just isn’t good enough. Yes, all sparkling wines have bubbles, and all bubbles are celebratory, but that doesn’t mean all sparkling wines are sufficiently celebratory for all occasions. The bottle you bring as a gift to a party full of people you sort-of know is not the same bottle you want to open when you are celebrating getting promoted to person-of-vast-power, getting engaged/having a birthday/toasting your new Lamborghini, or any combination of the above happening New Year’s Eve at midnight.

No, for those kinds of moments — or, what the hell, just because it’s Tuesday and cold outside — you need fancy Champagne. Really fancy Champagne. To help you avoid the awful paralysis of too much choice, I tasted a heap of top bottles: vintage releases, tête de cuvée bottlings, and similar, and landed on the recommendations here.

Are they expensive? Yes. But if you want to impress the hell out of someone — even yourself — with a truly amazing bottle, these will not disappoint.

07 | 2015 Champagne Bollinger Grand Année (\$250)

of 10



The latest vintage of Champagne Bollinger’s tête du cuvée was released this Spring, and while the challenging 2015 Champagne vintage wasn’t greeted with unanimous excitement throughout the region, this particular wine is profoundly impressive. It’s toasty and rich, mixing orchard-fruit flavors (peach, nectarine) with red fruit and blood orange hints. A slight increase in Grand Année’s usual amount of Chardonnay, from 30% to 40%, adds some necessary linearity and precision in this warm year.