

# CHAMPAGNE BOLLINGER

Known around the world for powerful, polished Champagnes that are among the greatest of both Non-Vintage and Vintage Champagnes produced, any of the fundamentals to their approach and production would be special, but when taken altogether are utterly unique.



## Vieilles Vignes Françaises 2009

Champagne, France

### ESTATE

Bollinger is an icon in Champagne, all the more remarkable because its reputation rests entirely on the quality of its extraordinarily distinct Champagnes. Very simply, Bollinger is the outlier. The rigorous, obsessive attention to detail and preservation of artisanal, almost absurdly labor-intensive practices, makes Bollinger both a guardian of the past and, as we see with each passing year, the beacon of the future.

### WINE

Vieilles Vignes Françaises is one of Champagne's most mythical cuvées, produced from miraculously preserved and ungrafted 100% Pinot Noir vines. Phylloxera destroyed the vines of Champagne in the early 20th century, but amazingly enough two of Bollinger's classified Grands crus plots, Chaudes Terres and Clos St. Jacques, survived and are still grown the traditional way. Madame Lily Bollinger first had this wine produced in 1969 as an anniversary cuvée to commemorate her 70th birthday. Following the wine's launch in 1974, Vieilles Vignes Françaises promptly became a collectible and a symbol of a bygone era. Over the decades, its uniqueness and scarcity have made it one of the most sought-after and expensive Champagnes.

### VINEYARD

Produced from the only two pre-phyloxera vineyards in all of Champagne, Chaudes Terres and Clos St Jacques, in Aÿ. These Grands crus plots are 100% ungrafted Pinot Noir, grown the traditional way, following the "provinage" method, worked by hand and even sometimes with the help of a cart-horse.

*Farming:* Sustainable wine growing by grassing over the ground, using biological pest control, reducing the use of herbicides, recycling pruning waste and planting hedges and orchards to encourage biodiversity.

### WINEMAKING

*Variety:* 100% Pinot Noir

*Fermentation:* Made in the traditional champagne method

*Aging:* On the lees for more than twice the time required by the appellation.

*Dosage:* 4 g/L

96+

vinous

"With a few hours of air, apricot, plum, spice, dried cherry and candied orange peel start to appear. In some years, VVF can be quite opulent, 2002 and 2010 come to mind. The 2009, on the other hand is much more vibrant. VVF remains one of the most compelling wines – still or sparkling – in the world. It emerges from ungrafted Pinot Noir vines in Aÿ's Chaudes Terres and Clos St. Jacques lieu-dits and is vinified and aged in barrel. Dosage is 4 grams per liter."

- ANTONIO GALLONI