



Champagne buyer's guide

reviewed by Joshua Greene

NICOLAS FEUILLATTE

Nicolas Feuillatte was a leading importer of African coffee while living in New York during the 1960s. That's when he and his brother inherited a 30-acre vineyard in Bouleuse, near Reims. At first they sold the grapes to other producers, but by 1976, they were making their own Champagne.

Ten years later, when Feuillatte was looking to expand, he approached the Centre Vinicole de la Champagne (CVC), the region's largest union of Champagne growers, which needed a brand name under which to sell its wines. They adopted his, in turn giving the Feuillatte brand the pick of the grapes. With 85 cooperatives, almost 5,000 winegrowers and another 1,040 who only grow grapes in the CVC, that's over 4,942 acres of vineyards stretching across Champagne from which to choose. Cellar master Jean-Pierre Vincent has overseen the brand's rapid growth, with a production of 5.5 million bottles per year, now the 7th largest Champagne producer. Given the breadth of the selection, and the ability to vinify each cru and grape variety separately, the Feuillatte wines vary in style, from the simple and clean Brut Premier Cru to the richer, luxurious Cuvée Palmes d'Or. *Pasternak Wine Imports, Greenwich, CT*



92 | Nicolas Feuillatte \$125
1992 Champagne Brut Cuvée Palmes d'Or Luxurious in a light, languid style, this wine's white fruit flavors offer facets of apple and pear. It feels spherical in the mouth, the creamy texture lifted by spice. A sophisticated pleasure.

87 | Nicolas Feuillatte \$175
1996 Champagne Rosé Brut Cuvée Palmes d'Or There's nothing understated about this brash, meaty rosé, its bitter-sweet spice bold as Campari. Give it time to age, or if you open it soon, pour it with something as substantial as veal in a green peppercorn sauce.

86 | Nicolas Feuillatte \$32
Champagne Brut Premier Cru Scents of lemon-lime pervade this clean, satisfying brut, a simple blend with a solid fruit presence. Its peppery finish will perk up poached shrimp.