

THE  
CHAMPAGNE  
GUIDE

2016-2017

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE  
TO CHAMPAGNE

TYSON STELZER

INTERNATIONAL WINE & SPIRITS  
COMMUNICATION OF THE YEAR 2017

HALL OF HONOUR

The Champagne Guide

• 2016-2017 •

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The Best Low-Dosage  
Champagnes of the Year \$\$\$-\$\$\$

BENOÎT LAHAYE EXTRA BRUT 2008 \$5 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 17	JACQUESSON CUVÉE N° 707 EXTRA BRUT NV \$5 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 103	AGRAPART & FILS MINÉRAL BLANC DE BLANC GRAND CRU EXTRA BRUT 2008 \$10 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 16	TARLANT CUVÉE LOUIS HONORÉ À LOUIS TARLANT Vm DE RUVIÈRE EXTRA BRUT NV \$5 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 114	VEUVE FOUYNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANC VERTUS PREMIER CRU VINTAGE EXTRA BRUT 2006 \$5 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 141	VEUVE FOUYNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANC VERTUS PREMIER CRU VINTAGE EXTRA BRUT 2008 \$5 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 141	AGRAPART & FILS MINÉRAL BLANC DE BLANC GRAND CRU EXTRA BRUT 2007 \$10 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 16	DUVAL-LEROY BLANC DE BLANC BRUT NATURE MILLÉNIUM 2008 \$10 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 111	EMMANUEL BROCHET LES HAUTS MAISON EXTRA BRUT 2008 \$11 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 139	JÉRÔME PRÉVOY LA CLORÉE LES BÉGINNES \$11 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 109	LE BRUN-SERVENAY BLANC DE BLANC X.O. EXTRA BRUT 1.5 NV \$11 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 118	TARLANT LA VIGNE D'ANTAN NON GRAPPÉE CHARDONNAY BRUT NATURE 2004 \$11 + 95 POINTS + PAGE 114
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*The Fourny brothers manage some of the finest terroirs in Vertus and their pristine champagnes look more pure, precise and fresh with every release. – Tyson Stelzer*

*When a tiny plot on pure chalk in the coveted « Le Mont Ferré » hillsides of the northern end of Vertus towards Le Mesnil-sur-Oger came up for sale in the summer of 2011, offers poured in from big houses, but the grower chose the brothers Emmanuel and Charles-Henry Fourny as its new custodians. The offer was indicative of the respect with which the young fifth-generation growers manage some of the finest terroirs in Vertus. Their location on Rue du Mesnil on the northern edge of Vertus is a clue to their success, with vineyards capturing the more mineral side of the premier cru village neighbouring the grand cru of Le Mesnil-sur-Oger itself.*

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE GRANDE RÉSERVE PREMIER CRU VERTUS BRUT NV

89 points • 2011 BASE VINTAGE WITH 50% RESERVES FROM 2010, 2009 & 2008  
 • DISBURGED SEPTEMBER 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS  
 90 points • 2010 BASE VINTAGE WITH 40% RESERVES FROM 2009, 2008 & 2007  
 • DISBURGED DECEMBER 2013 • TASTED IN BRISBANE, SYDNEY & MELBOURNE

Picking a few weeks after everyone else, the Fourny brothers were happy with the standard of 2011, though both 2011 and 2010 carry a dry extract grip that I've not seen in Fourny before. The high proportion of reserves in this cuvée helps to lift its fruit presence of crunchy grapefruit zest, beaute base pear, apple and subtle complexity of almond spice and honey puff. A firmly textured finish is accented by tangy primary acidity in the 2011 base, while the 2010 unites rounded balance with fine mineral texture.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANCS VERTUS PREMIER CRU NV

91 points • 2011 BASE VINTAGE WITH RESERVES FROM 2010, 2009 & 2008  
 • TASTED IN VERTUS  
 93 points • 2010 BASE VINTAGE WITH 20% RESERVES FROM 2009, 2008 & 2007  
 • DISBURGED DECEMBER 2013 • TASTED IN BRISBANE

The 2011 base is expressive of the exotic personality of Vertus, filled with grand complexity of boiled orange and fig, contrasting accuracy, salt, chalk mineral definition with well-defined acid tension. In the 2010 base, Fourny's mandate of purity and precision shimmers in purity and focus of lemon blossom, lemon zest and lemon juicer of soap-powder brightness, while a touch of barrel influence draws out biscuity, brioche depth.



#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANCS VERTUS PREMIER CRU BRUT NATURE NV

90 points • 2011 BASE VINTAGE • TASTED IN VERTUS

Under the command of old vines, the chalk soils of Le Mont Ferré hark more to the mineral structure of the thundering grand crus to their north than to the more fruity premier crus around them, and without the interruption of dosage, the strength of strong, salt-infused mineral texture is pronounced. Fourny's fanatical attention to ripe fruit from low-yielding old vines is declared in boiled orange exotica, finishing with good persistence, though marked by the dry tension of 2011.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE MONTS DE VERTUS BLANC DE BLANCS EXTRA BRUT 2009

94 points • DISBURGED OCTOBER 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS

An ebullient wine from a warm vintage that captures the exotism of Vertus in boiled orange, glazed fig, mixed spice and grapefruit pith. Resonating with great soils tapped by deep roots, the minerality is very well defined and salty, supported by nicely balanced acidity which draws out a long finish.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANCS VERTUS PREMIER CRU VINTAGE EXTRA BRUT 2008

93 points • DISBURGED APRIL 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS

A great expression of a fantastic vintage in a mineral-rich site, this is a cuvée of striking complexity, brimming with spice, toast, even blood orange, coffee and dark chocolate. True to the precision of 2008, its core is resolute, a focused expression of lemon vivacity and crunchy red apple. A vintage of great longevity.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANCS VERTUS PREMIER CRU VINTAGE EXTRA BRUT 2007

94 points • DISBURGED DECEMBER 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS

The Fournys describe 2007 as a charming vintage, and have captured the elegance and confidence of Vertus in a fresh acid line and soft voice of wonderfully textured, frothy, salty minerality. They've layered this backdrop with the lingering complexity of brioche, coffee and dark chocolate, providing immediate appeal, without interfering with a structure that will hold it for a few years yet.



#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE BLANC DE BLANCS VERTUS PREMIER CRU VINTAGE EXTRA BRUT 2006

95 points • TASTED IN SYDNEY & MELBOURNE

An invigorating vintage Fourny that holds its head as high as ever, brilliantly contrasting airy tension, generous expression and awe-inspiring persistence. Purity is retained in lemon zest freshness, crunchy pear and apple fruit, while age has drawn out subtle almond development. At its core it remains backward and lively with fruit propelled upwards by all-pervading chalk mineral texture that propagates pristine line and length. Great potential to accelerate for some years yet.



#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE R DE VVE FOURNY & FILS VERTUS EXTRA BRUT NV

93 points • 2009 BASE VINTAGE • DISBURGED JANUARY 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS, SYDNEY & MELBOURNE

The hood remains of Fourny's pristine fruit, meeting the twisting complexity of old oak and swirling, teasing minerality makes for quite a display. Fermentation in old oak barrels amplifies both: adds minerality drawn from the thin soils of the north of Vertus near Le Mesnil-sur-Oger by grand old vines. Carefully crafted old oak cradles things up a notch from Fourny's other non-vintage cuvées, making for a taut and dry blend of R, with a mouthful of grapefruit pith texture. High-tensile acidity constrains low dosage, calling for another few years for oak and acid to relax.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE DU CLOS FG NOTRE DAME PREMIER CRU VERTUS EXTRA BRUT 2005

93 points • DISBURGED DECEMBER 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS

The Fourny brothers describe their flagship wine as 'eternal' and as it seems, it is, even in the generous 2005 season. Its acidity is unerring, its salty chalk mineral structure well scaffolded and its oak support confident, with a structure heightened by the barefoot bitterness and dry texture of the vintage. The exotism of Vertus shines in glazed orange and exotic spice, with a numbing undercurrent of butterscotch, toast and roast nuts. Tight acidity and fine, dry extract make for an assertive finish that demands a decade or more for its oak to soften and mellow.

#### VEUVE FOURNY & FILS CUVÉE DU CLOS FG NOTRE DAME PREMIER CRU VERTUS EXTRA BRUT 2004

93 points • DISBURGED DECEMBER 2014 • TASTED IN VERTUS

Lock up the cellar and throw away the key. Clos Foubourg Notre Dame always needs a very long time to come together. The 2004 projects the lemon and orange citrus freshness of Vertus, softened and rounded thanks to barrel fermentation and almost a decade of bottle age. The grapefruit-pith bitterness characteristic of this cuvée brings grip and definition to a finish of soft, creamy chalk minerality. It needs years to uncoil, and when it does finally emerge, drink it slowly from huge glasses at white wine temperature.

