

Champagne
BRUNO PAILLARD
N.P.U. 2002
"Nec Plus Ultra"

The cuvée N.P.U. - "Nec Plus Ultra", is born from the desire to create - whatever the costs and constraints - the greatest wine from Champagne.

To do this, the most demanding choices have been made at all stages of its development. From this crazy dream is born a Champagne with the most absolute vinification ...

N.P.U. – « Nec Plus Ultra ».

Extraordinary vintages...

Above all else, it takes a great year ... we patiently cultivated our know-how, whilst waiting for the year that would give birth to the first N.P.U. - "Nec Plus Ultra": the magnificent year 1990. Five would follow, all with different temperaments: the generous 1995; the eccentric 1996; the most classic 1999; the very audacious 2003.

And, finally, 2002 :

A vintage that was well-celebrated, which it was urgently necessary to wait for ...

A relatively dry and warm year, without excessive heat, which allowed the grapes to ripen consistently. Beautiful, sunny days lasted the duration of the harvest, and particularly cool nights gave ideal thermal amplitude, essential for the maturity and health of the grapes. The low yielding harvest produced concentrated and aromatic grapes which allowed a glimpse of a great year; intense and with a crystalline minerality.

Exclusively Grands Crus...

Of the 320 villages in Champagne, only 17 are entitled to the appellation "Grand Cru": the grapes selected to create the cuvée N.P.U. - "Nec Plus Ultra" 2002 come exclusively from six of them: Oger; Le Mesnil-sur-Oger; Chouilly; Verzenay; Mailly; and Bouzy, split equally between Chardonnay and Pinots Noir.

These are the most sought-after grapes of Champagne ...

In small oak barrels...

Vinification was carried out, as always with BRUNO PAILLARD, using exclusively the first pressing, the purest.

But an essential feature of N.P.U.- "Nec Plus Ultra" is that fermentation took place in small oak barrels in which the wines spent their first 10 months. During this period, each cru developed its complexity and acquired the slightly woody aromas so particular to the great Champagnes of yesterday. The wine gently breathes through the barrel, allowing it to harmonise. During the summer following the harvest, in July 2003, after 10 months maturing in barrels, 28 of them were selected, composing a Cuvée of 6,200 bottles and 300 magnums.

15 years in cellar ...

The second fermentation takes place in the bottle, and a long maturation begins in the darkness of our cool cellars, at a constant temperature of 10.5 ° C. One of the essential points concerning N.P.U. is the exceptional length of maturing on lees. These bottles remained in the cellar for 12 years, before riddling and disgorging, and then again for a long period of rest of more than 3 years after its disgorgement. Altogether 15 years ! This is absolutely unique in Champagne.

As always at BRUNO PAILLARD, the dosage is very low. In the case of N.P.U. - "Nec Plus Ultra", it is reduced to the strict minimum of 3g/l, practically imperceptible. It is therefore an "Extra-Brut".

Each bottle is numbered, and bears the date of disgorgement.

Discover...

To discover such a wine, which has waited so long, it is essential to take time: its tasting alone is a great experience. It should be served at cellar temperature, slightly refreshed down to 8°C or 9°C in a bucket half-filled with water in which one will have put a few ice cubes. Do not leave it too long in a refrigerator, nor under ice.

It can be enjoyed alone, as an aperitif where its complexity will fully express itself, or it can accompany an entire meal, provided that it does not include a sweet dish.

N.P.U. - "Nec Plus Ultra" 2002 has requested 15 years of patience to begin to reach its full expression: it is important to give it time to open in the glass...

Tasting notes, Reims, September 18th :

APPEARANCE: deep gold, dense and brilliant. Very fine bubbles, gentle and delicate.

NOSE: a direct and frank character. Primary aromas of Parma violets, green pepper and raspberry. Gentle notes of mint, frangipane, then dark fruits once aerated with more subtle notes of Mirabelle plums and pear. Great complexity; floral, fruity, evolving and lively.

PALATE: a generous velvety and gourmand texture. Surprisingly fresh fruit, but also candied citrus and gingerbread notes. The overall sensation is balanced, between a great vitality and full maturity. A very complete wine.

www.champagnebrunopailard.com

Indicative price: about \$275 in the USA, £240 in the UK, €200 in France