

ROSÉ 250 YEARS

250 years since the first rosé champagne

Ruinart, the first established Champagne House, founded in 1729, has been shipping rosé champagne since 1764.

The House's account book is the proof. On 14 March 1764, it is written that there was a shipment of «*a basket of 120 bottles, 60 bottles of which were Oeil de Perdrix*».

What is the connection between birds of the Gallinaceae family and the early history of the oldest Champagne House? In fact, the term «Oeil de Perdrix» means a colour which could be described as a delicate pink with coppery reflections. There's no longer any doubt. Ruinart shipped its first bottles of rosé champagne in 1764.

250 years : such a fabulous anniversary in so many ways, an historic date which links Ruinart forever to the history of champagne.

The account books, various correspondence and the accounts of the heads of the House have allowed us to discover a multitude of varieties and oenological trials in search of taste, flavour and the ideal colour. What was in all probability a rosé from maceration at the beginning would then evolve to become a blended rosé. Ruinart explored various ways of obtaining a coloured champagne, for example by using the colouring of some elderberries. The palette of colours for these wines was very large. There were a number of terms to define them in French: roset, oeil de perdrix, rozet, paillé (straw), clairer (pale wine) and even cerise (cherry).

Towards the end of the 18th century, the expression «Oeil de Perdrix» disappeared in favour of names closer to those we use: rozet and then rosé.

At the beginning of the 19th century, François-Irénée Ruinart, the grandson of the founder, bequeathed all the Ruinart savoir-faire to his sons in his manual. In it, he presents rosé champagne as being a precious wine offered by the House to the greatest connoisseurs amongst its clients.

In the middle of the 19th century, the blending method used was the one that was finally accepted. In fact, successive heads of the House had observed from their experience that neither maceration nor adding colour to white champagne met their expectations in terms of colour, taste and aromas.

Ruinart Rosé radiated throughout Europe.

Why was rosé champagne so popular?

It would be hard to say precisely, though there were many champagne lovers. In the account book, it is possible to find traces of purchases by the ruling elite or other grand families in the European aristocracy from 1764 onwards.

This wave of success began in Germany where on 14 March 1764, the book reports the famous first shipment of *60 bottles of Oeil de Perdrix* to Baron de Welzel, who ordered rosé for His Serene Highness the Duke of Mecklembourg-Strelitz.

Then the orders crossed yet more borders, that of Austria for example, where Mr. de Neni, «private secretary» to H.M The Empress Marie-Thérèse in Vienna, received 60 bottles on 9 October 1764.

Other orders were then added for the Netherlands and Poland.

In the years that followed, shipments left for Denmark and the Czech Republic (1765), Italy (1767), Sweden (1768), the United Kingdom (1775), Switzerland (1795), Belgium, Luxembourg and Ireland (1814) and even Ukraine (1838).

«Oeil de Perdrix» rosé champagne gradually conquered Europe.

Ruinart Rosé, the result of 250 years' of research and perfectionism.

It will be nearly three centuries throughout which Maison Ruinart has followed the same objectives: creativity in its methods for producing champagne and the quest for excellence.

By the middle of the 19th century, several stages had been necessary to arrive at the method still used today: that of blending white wines and wines from Pinot Noir grapes made into red wine.

Their aromatic and organoleptic qualities blend together in a splendid balance to reveal all the richness and diversity which the different grape varieties, different crus and different harvesting years can offer. Blending is also the only method which enables Maison Ruinart to express its style fully, distinguished by a high proportion of Chardonnay.

Over and above all these elements, the work of the Cellar Master provides perfect harmony. This is the real talent of the man who marries two wines to obtain an exceptional third wine.

Over time, blended rosé has become the traditional technique of the appellation. Furthermore, only the Champenois (those from the Champagne region) are allowed to continue this historic process.

Ruinart Rosé is emblematic of the House style. Its elegance and exceptional aromatic freshness are the signature of a high proportion of Chardonnay (45%) from the Montagne de Reims vineyard. The fruity generous character is provided from the Pinot Noir made into red wine, also in a significant proportion (18 to 19%) depending on the year. The short maceration of grapes made into red wine combined with a light extraction preserves the entire complexity of the flavours of this grape variety and makes the rosé champagne silky on the palate. Surprising notes of exotic fruits like guava and lychee are added to the delicate, expressive aromas of red fruit. Ruinart Rosé takes on a pretty yet intense colour of pomegranate pink with very light orange reflections.

Ruinart Rosé is a champagne that is very pleasant to drink both in summer and winter as an aperitif or throughout a meal. Its generous side makes it the favoured partner for a wide variety of dishes. Ultimate refinement ... let its colour guide you: the delicate pink bubbles go wonderfully with salmon, veal, and a vanilla and raspberry panna cotta.