

# ROCK JUICE WINES ⚡ DECEMBER 2017

*At the very least, all RJ wines are farmed organically/biodynamically (certified or verified practicing), fermented only with native yeasts, and produced with no additives except a small amount of sulfur (50ppm or less).*

## **2016 Martin Texier 'Petite Nature' Pétillant-Naturel \$22**

Region: Rhone Valley < France

Grapes: 50% Pink & white Chasselas, 50% Muscat du Hambourg

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Certified biodynamic farming (Demeter & Ecocert); sandstone soils on top of granite rock; ancestral method: direct press to stainless steel tanks for fermentation, then bottled with a little RS left to carry out secondary fermentation in the bottle and trap the natural bubbles; no added SO<sub>2</sub>; 12% ABV; 250 cases made.

Winemaker: Martin Texier

Martin Texier (his father, Eric, a well-known northern Rhône natural wine producer) began making wine in 2014 after a stint in music (he's a pretty rad DJ) and wine trade internships in NYC. But he felt the pull of the vines, and realized that wanted to follow in his father's footsteps. Dad gifted him this vineyard, an abandoned site in Ardèche with some Chasselas, Muscat and random table grapes, which all ferment together to make his Petite Nature Pet'Nat in the ancestral method. It's softly sparkling, with pear, white flower, green herbs and a hit of grapefruit, and just enough of a hint of earth to remind you this isn't your mama's Prosecco. The overall effect is delicious, bone dry and highly aromatic (think apple cider meets tart lemon candy). Can you say brunch wine?

## **2014 Didier Montchovet Cremant de Bourgogne Blanc de Blancs \$30**

Region: Burgundy < France

Grapes: Chardonnay 80%, Aligoté 20%.

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: certified biodynamic, conserves rainwater and repurposes throughout the year, operates the wine cellar by gravity only, 30 year-old vines, vineyard farmed exclusively for the Crémant, methode traditionnelle

Winemaker: Didier Montchovet

This Crémant is one of two awesome wines we're working with this month from Didier Montchovet in Burgundy. Farming biodynamically, Didier has slowly grown his estate from just half a hectare to 9.2, keeping with the same vineyards-first philosophy and turning out stunning wines with low intervention. Craving bubbles but not on a Champagne budget? This is your wine. Made in the Champagne method, mostly of Chardonnay, and on a similar soil. You get a hint of those yeasty notes, green apple, lemon and delicate bubbles, yet the finish is clean, bright and a bit stony. Grab the raw oysters and shellfish platter, or a baked brie. It will stand up to all, and the limey minerality will refresh your palate and leave you wanting more. A serious wine for sure, but that doesn't mean you have to be – keep the corks popping!

## **2016 Domaine Serol Turbulent Pet'nat**

Region: Côte Roannaise < Loire Valley < France

Grapes: Gamay Saint Romain

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming (in process for EcoCert certification), 10 to 80-year-old vines, granite soil, partial whole cluster fermentation in enamel lined tank with native yeast, low SO<sub>2</sub> at bottling

Domaine Sérol, passed from father to son through 5 generations and dating back to the 18th century, is located about 50km from Lyon in the Southern Loire, in one of the newest AOC zones, the Côte Roannaise. This is ancestral method, lightly sparkling rose of Gamay that doesn't completely ferment to dryness, so it is refreshingly low-octane (8% ABV) and ever so slightly sweet, balanced by ripping acidity. Pour with abandon to start or finish any and all holiday gatherings! Perfect as an *aperif*, with a whole range of appetizers, especially rich, funky washed-rind cheeses; also fantastic with creamy or fruit-based desserts, and also as a light finish a meal, no dessert needed!

## **2016 Jurtschitsch 'Stein' Grüner Veltliner \$22**

Region: Kamptal < Austria

Grapes: Grüner Veltliner

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: organic farming, quartz, granite, dolomite rock soils, 500m elevation; fermented in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks and left to rest on the fine lees before bottling in spring;

Winemaker: Alwin Jurtschitsch

The family-owned Jurtschitsch winery, the oldest in the area (16<sup>th</sup> century), has now been passed on to Alwin Jurtschitsch and his wife, Stefanie Hasselbach, a young couple who are leaders in the Kamptal's natural wine movement. Alwin and Stef started working at the winery in 2006, converted all of the vineyards to organic viticulture, and from day one made wine in an old-school classic style, without any additions, aside from minimal sulfur at bottling. This is really rare in cold, wet Austria! The grapes for this wine come from various mountain-sloped vineyards – pristine, Alpine, Heidi territory. And it is textbook perfect Gruner: cool, elegant and compact, with grapefruit, salt, stone fruit and wet rock, zippy, refreshing and appetite-whetting. Give it a swirl and a few minutes in the glass, and you

get something like peppery arugula, green pear and lemony spritz. The ultimate, all-purpose food wine – if you're unsure what to serve with dinner, go Gruner!

### **2015 Didier Montchovet Bourgogne Aligoté \$23**

Region: Burgundy < France

Grapes: Aligoté

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: certified biodynamic, conserves rainwater and repurposes throughout the year, operates the wine cellar by gravity only, 30-70 year old vines, fermented in inert, enameled vats, aged 6 months; 12.5% ABV

Winemaker: Didier Montchovet

Burgundy is the historic home of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir as we all know but Aligoté is the regions unsung hero. We've stumbled across a few of incredible quality recently, mostly because the large négoce have ignored the grape in favor of Chardonnay. Thankfully, however, the remaining older vines have fallen into the hands of small producers like Didier Montchovet. who has slowly grown his estate from just half a hectare to 9.2, keeping with the same vineyards-first philosophy and turning out stunning wines with low intervention. As you'll see with both the Aligoté and his Crémant de Bourgogne, also featured this month, Didier captures the terroir of his land with wines that are deep and soulful. Bright and aromatic, this wine is full of lemon merengue and lees-y goodness. There's a note of pie crust and a rich mouthfeel, cleaned up with zippy acid and a long, savory finish. Bring it on with any of your latke versions or other celebratory fried foods, and it will cleanse your palate like no other. Or, go the other direction and pair with sushi – she's a super versatile food wine!

### **2015 Casa de Mouraz ALR Vinho Verde \$22**

Region: Dão < Portugal

Grapes: Loureiro, Avesso plus a splash of Arinto + Azul

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: ECOCERT certified organic since 1996, biodynamic since 2006; granite soil; fermented in stainless steel then rests on its lees for 3 months; zero added SO<sub>2</sub>; 10.5% ABV

Winemaker: Sara Dionísio & António Lopes Ribeiro

Husband and wife Sara and António took over António's family's organic estate, but only after he studied law and worked as an editor. In 2000, the couple quit their jobs, left Lisbon behind and returned to the Dão to make wine. In the rough, rocky foothills of the Serra de Estrela Mountain, Portugal's highest mountain range, Sara and António farm a handful of native grapes biodynamically - super challenging in this humid, damp region where almost everyone sprays chemicals to combat the rampant mildew, rot and pests. This is one of the best Vinho Verdes we've ever had, drinking more like a perfect dry Riesling than the often one-dimensional, fluffy Vinho Verdes on the market. Like in Riesling, there is an oily texture, with gorgeous honeyed lime notes, intense slate-y minerality, and a surprising weight for such a low alcohol wine. It is all-day drinkable at only 10.5%!

### **2012 J.B. Becker Kabinett Trocken Riesling 'Wallufer Walkenberg' \$22**

Region: Rheingau < Germany

Grapes: Riesling

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Certified organic farming; loam and slate soil, quick, warm fermentation, then the juice is racked into the traditional barrels of the Rheingau for at least two years of barrel age before bottling; <50ppm added so<sub>2</sub> – unheard of for Germany! 12% ABV

Winemaker: Hans-Josef Becker

The estate was founded in 1893 by Hans-Josef's grandfather, Jean Baptiste Becker. Becker (and his father before him) has worked the vineyards organically for many, many years (they have been certified since 2011). Yet this important fact is mentioned exactly nowhere - not on the labels, not at the estate. Nor does Becker talk about his insistence on wild-yeast fermentations and low so<sub>2</sub> (both extremely rare in Germany). This is just the way he makes wine, the way the family always has. So basically Becker, one of the OG German wine elder statesmen, is right up there next to the young hipster-growers in terms of "nattiness", but he wants nothing to do with these labels. Which totally doesn't matter, because the wine speaks for itself – it is mind-blowingly good, and will change your mind about Riesling if you aren't yet convinced. This one kind of reminds me of a great Chablis – and I'm not alone, considering the hashtag that's often applied to Becker's wines: #Chabliesling. Bone dry, savory and briny, with dark granitic minerals, fresh peach, lime, sharp granny smith apples and a gravelly finish. After about an hour the fruit opens up a little more. Even more on day 3! These wines taste like NOTHING else coming out of the Rheingau, and Hans-Josef Becker just doesn't give a f\*#k. Love him, love this wine. Which BTW is an amazing value for aged, DRY Riesling. Perfect gift for your somm or wine geek friend!

### **2016 Sierra de Toloño Blanco Rioja \$20**

Region: Rioja < Spain

Grapes: Viura

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Biodynamic farming, clay-chalk soils, 650m altitude (highest vineyards in Rioja); aged 90% in tank, 10% neutral barrel, then racked off the lees before bottling; unfinned/unfiltered with 30ppm SO<sub>2</sub> added at bottling; 750 cases made; 12.5% ABV

Winemaker: Sandra Bravo Marin

We featured Sandra's Rioja last year, and are now are crushing on her blanco. Quick recap: Sandra is a young female vigneron who didn't

grow up in the wine biz, but followed her passion to join the boys club of Rioja and make wine. First, though, she traveled the world making wine, with well-respected names in France and California, before settling back in her home country for her own project. Though she doesn't own vineyards, Sandra does all the vineyard farming herself, biodynamically, and is very hands-off in the cellar. This white is produced from a few rows of vines interspersed among the Tempranillo in a few of her rocky, high-altitude Rioja Alavesa parcels. Feminine with a powerful core, it is brisk and mineral, with a cool-vintage Chablis quality to it. And some really interesting ginger spice. Viura can be a very bland, flabby grape – this wine is anything but. Sandra is a winemaker to watch!

#### **2016 Umathum Rosa \$20**

Region: Neusiedlersee < Burgenland < Austria

Grapes: Zweigelt, Blaufrankish, St. Laurent

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Biodynamic farming; fermented and aged in large neutral oak casks, with a portion of stems added back into the wine as it ferments; 12.5% ABV

Winemaker: Josef "Pepi" Umathum

Austria, for good reason, is better known for its white wines than its reds. It's hard to compete with such an incredible wealth of Riesling and Grüner Veltliner that thrive in the mineral rich, stony soils. But Pepi Umathum loves the Zweigelt grape, and is working to bring it some glory. A disenchanted landscape architecture student, Pepi jumped at the chance to take over his parents' winery, which they founded in 1958. From the initial 10 acres of land near the vast lake Neusiedlersee in Austria's center, Umathum grew his family's holdings to nearly 90 acres. He has been practicing strict selection massale (a method of propagating grape vines using cuttings from an entire vineyard rather than selected clones) to replant his vineyards since the late 1980s, along with organic viticulture. In 2005 he converted completely to biodynamic farming and winemaking, and now he's even keeping a flock of sheep in his vineyards for fertilization and pest control. This is the perfect winter rosé, bright pink in color (from these dark, thick-skinned grapes) that drinks almost like a light, chill-able red, and tastes like a basket of forest berries and spiced cherries.

#### **2016 Holden Pretty Things Rosé**

Region: Willamette Valley < Oregon

Grapes: Nebbiolo, Dolcetto

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic + sustainable farming; direct press, left to settle for a couple days, then racked to neutral barrels and left to ferment; minimal added SO2 at bottling only

Winemaker: Sterling Whitted

Sterling Whitted is Holden and has been since the 2011 vintage. This is a pretty remarkable blend of Nebbiolo from the Columbia Gorge and Dolcetto from Southern Oregon. Super refreshing and dry, a little tart and edgy, with savory melon, rose petal and bitter almond. This is serious wine, not to be put in the corner with so many innocuous but bland rosé and left for summer porch pounding. Drink this now with Pad Thai or shrimp tacos. Or enjoy on its own, as you holiday fête your pretty little heart out...

#### **2016 Irene El Dorado Red \$25**

Region: Beaujolais < Burgundy < CA

Grapes: 80/20 Mourvedre/Syrah

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming; volcanic soil over decomposed granite; 100% whole cluster fermentation, pump overs/ punch-downs and aged in neutral oak for seven months; bottled unfined/unfiltered with 30ppm added so2; 11.8% ABV; 220 bottles

Winemaker: Brian + Katelynn Jessen

Irene is a 2 year-old bootstrapped project from thirty-something couple Brian + Katelynn Jessen. Bryan, originally from Monterey County, studied wine business and viticulture/enology at Sonoma State at Santa Rose JC, then worked around Italy, New Zealand, and finally as cellar master at Copain Wines before starting his own project with wife Katelynn. They both still have day jobs (he sells vine cuttings and rootstock to nurseries, she's an artist), but their passion is Irene, their own label, named in honor of Brian's mother, who passed away when he was young. Brian makes the wine at a custom crush facility in Healdsburg, and Katelynn paints the labels. Like most upstart Cali producers, they don't own vineyards, so the biggest challenge is sourcing good, organic fruit. But they did it, securing Syrah from Fenaughty Vineyard and Mourvèdre from Neighbors Vineyard, both well-regarded, practicing organic, higher-elevation sites northeast of Placerville in El Dorado County, both with that glorious volcanic soil. They pick and bottle earlier for this wine, to bring out the freshness and keep it light. These guys are one of my favorite discoveries of 2017, and this wine is incredible: clean and bright Cali glou glou that tastes of wet earth and vibrant red fruit and baking spice, then opens up to reveal more Violet, floral notes. Pair with roasted squash salad w/ dandelion, bacon + pecans (tested with Suzanne Goin's recipe!); pasta with mushroom Bolognese sauce, or anything mushroom. Or best of all, a roaring fire and someone to snuggle!

#### **2016 Binner Pirouettes Pinot Noir d'Hubert et Christian \$26**

Region: Alsace < France

Grapes: Pinot Noir

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic Wine certification (ECOCERT since 2014); 40+ year-old vines on gneiss soils; Grapes are hand harvested with a triage performed at the vines. Whole cluster fermentation for about 2 weeks, followed by manual pigeage; levage on the lees for one year and bottled, unfinned and unfiltered, with zero added sulfur

Winemaker: Christian Binner

Les Vins Pirouttes is a project from Alsace's leading natural winemaker, Christian Binner, to promote more + affordable natural wines from the region, and to help organic/biodynamic grape growers there move away from selling their grapes to cooperatives, towards making and bottling their own wines. Each Pirouettes cuvee is a partnership between Christian and a young Alsatian winemaker, who provide the grapes and the winery, while Christian teaches and helps them how to make world-class, low-intervention wines. Like this gorgeous, bright, cherry-spicy Pinot Noir, which nothing added, including so2. It's like a pair of warm fuzzy slippers over thigh-high stockings – comfortable and familiar yet with a subtle, racy, edge. And so delicious, with juicy Marasca cherries, pine resin, cherry cola and zested orange peel. Serve slightly chilled, and try not to gulp.

### **2016 Subject to Change Wine Co. Carbonic Red \$23**

Region: Redwood Valley < Mendocino < California

Grapes: 85/15 Carignan + Syrah

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: CCOF certified organic, dry-farmed xx-year old vines; true carbonic fermentation: the fruit is moved gently from picking bins into a stainless steel tank which is layered with dry ice, then the tank is sealed up, largely left alone for two weeks, for carbonic fermentation; then its pressed to a tank for primary fermentation, then racked to barrels to finish primary, then back to a tank for bottling, unfinned/unfiltered, with zero added SO2; 200 bottles; xx% ABV

Winemaker: Alex Pomerantz + Brad Friedman

Brand spanking new project from my good friend Alex Pomerantz (formerly of Sonoma's Kivelstadt Cellars) and his partner, Brad Friedman, formerly assistant winemaker at Santa Cruz's Big Basin. In fact, so new that they didn't have time to develop real branding or labels, hence the name, Subject to Change... Mostly Carignan with a touch of Syrah, this is legit west coast nouveau, made like Beaujolais Nouveau. Somehow these guys scored highly sought-after certified organic fruit from Poor Ranch in Hopland, farmed by 5th generation farmers John and Susan Poor and son John Poor Jr. John Sr.'s great grandfather homesteaded the property and began planting vines in the 1800's. This wine was a bit of an experiment for Alex and Brad – Alex says, "it kind of smelled like weird meat during carbonic fermentation, and we didn't really know what we were doing, but it turned out beautifully." Thankfully it no longer smells like weird meat. Savory and herbal, yet super light and chuggable, this wine is slightly reminiscent of black raspberry Kool-aid, in the very best way. Drink slight chilled, with pizza or pretty much any comfort food - burgers, mac & cheese, pork sliders, fondue, cheese puffs....

### **2016 Bura Plavac 'Fresh' \$19**

Region: Dalmatia < Croatia

Grapes: Plavac Mali

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming; some carbonic fermentation, aged 5 months in enox; bottled unfinned with 10ppm SO2; 12.5% ABV

Winemaker: Mare Bura

The Bura family has been growing grapes making wine on the Pelješac peninsula, parallel to Croatia's Dalmatian Coast, for hundreds of years, but only since the fall of the Communist era have they been able to focus on quality, as before 60% of their harvest had to be turned over to the government co-ops. Now young Mare Bura is making the wine, having taken over from her uncle Niko. Literally artisan garagistes, with the winemaking setup on the ground floor of the house, the Bura's are one of Dalmatia's leaders in quality – because they focus on vineyard health, not "making" the wine. Plavac Mali is the main grape of the region, and is loosely related to Zinfandel. These are cooler climate, hillside vines, with a distinct coastal influence, so rather than jammy, you get fruit that is at once both deep and dark, and bright and lifted. An intriguing combo of vibrant, tart boysenberry, pomegranate, slate and yogurt, with some sweet tannins on the finish. Another one best with a slight chill (30 min).

### **2016 Humus Red \$21**

Region: Lisbon < Portugal

Grapes: Touriga Nacional

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming, certified by Sativa PT since 2007; 30% carbonic fermentation in enox tanks; zero additions, not even SO2; unfinned/unfiltered; 12.5% ABV

Winemaker: Rodrigo Filipe

Quinta do Paço is Rodrigo's small family farm, about one hour north of Lisbon and 20km from the Atlantic, a cool microclimate where you get cooling sea breezes and high humidity (good for maintaining acid in grapes). Rodrigo's father planted the first parcels of vines in the 90s but it wasn't until the early 2000s that Rodrigo took on the role as winemaker (winegrower actually) after working as an engineer. He has no formal oenology training, having learned by reading his father's old wine books, attending various courses and workshops, and by following his gut, always focused on the quality of the grapes and the health of the soil. This is a unique wine for Portugal: partially carbonic, no added sulfur, Beaujolais style Touriga Nacional - a bright glass of Christmas spice! Warming, comforting yet light and juicy, perfect with exotic spiced dishes, like Moroccan + Indian, or anything with a sweet-tart element, like cranberries or pomegranates.

### **2016 Julien Sunier Regnie \$27**

Region: Régnié < Beaujolais < France

Grapes: Gamay

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: organic farming, 60 year-old vines, granitic sandy soil; semi-carbonic fermentation (whole cluster), in concrete tanks; aged 11 months in neutral barrel; bottled unfinned/unfiltered with 15ppm added so2; 12.2% ABV

Winemaker: Julien Sunier

Julien Sunier is a perennial somm and natural wine-darling, whose wine crosses boundaries between classic and modern. The somms like the purity and Burgundian nature of his Beaujolais Crus, while the natty crowd is drawn to his youth and low-intervention practices. For us, this wine IS Régnié – so lithe and light on the tongue, despite some earthy spice and firm tannic structure, you could seriously chug it straight from the bottle. Yet fine and elegant enough for the dinner table, with loads of poppy red fruit, pine needle and holiday spice. Throw in the fridge for 30 min, then serve with turkey and other holiday dinner fare, appetizers of all sorts and spicy food like Indian.

### **2015 Melaric 'Le Tandem' Cab Franc/Grolleau \$23**

Region: Saumur < Loire Valley < France

Grapes: 60% Grolleau, 40% Cabernet Franc

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic, dry-farmed vineyards; white chalk soils; 8 months in tank, bottled without fining or filtering; 12% ABV

Winemaker: Mélanie and Aymeric Hilaire

Mélanie and Aymeric started making wine in 2006, organic and hands-off from the start. They have a strong resistance to sulfur, saying that, 'When wine is strong, it is better without,' he says. When they do add a tiny bit of SO2 before bottling, they have a machine for making their own preparation from volcanic elemental sulfur, engineered by a biodynamic guy, that a few other organic growers use. This is bright and earthy table wine, with some pepper, vivid raspberry, sour cherry and cranberry - crisp, fresh and super clean on the palate.

## **ADD-ONS DECEMBER**

### **2014 Domaine de Chassorney St. Romain Rouge 'Sous Roches' \$66**

Region: Côte d'Or < Burgundy < France

Grapes: Pinot Noir

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming, limestone soils with a bit of clay; fermented in oak and aged in barrel for 3 years, then bottled unfinned/unfiltered; zero added SO2

Winemaker: Frédéric Cossard

Frédéric is blazing the trail for natural wine in the Côte d'Or, and extremely natty at that – a bold move, considering that there is really only one other producer working naturally in this region of big prices and big manipulation. A relative newcomer to wine (he started in the milk trade, following in his father's footsteps), Frédéric started his Domaine de Chassorney in 1996 with some small parcels in Saint-Romain and has since amassed choice parcels in Volnay and Pommard. He also makes wine under the negociant label "Frédéric Cossard", which rents and organically farms parcels in Beaujolais and the Côte de Nuits. Frédéric has worked organically from the start, and now does what he calls "homeopathic farming", taking biodynamics a step further, avoiding the bioD-approved treatments in favor of homeopathic treatments tailored to the needs of each site. He makes his wines utilizing some of the hygienic practices he learned working with raw milk, allowing him to add no chemicals whatsoever (including no sulfur). Macerations and fermentations are long (5-6 weeks), and he ages in new to three-year-old barrels. He sterilizes his barrels using ionized negative oxygen molecules, which eliminates the need for any chemical cleansers. During élevage, he neither stirs nor racks. When both the alcoholic and malolactic fermentations finish, he assembles his wines without fining, filtration, or additions of SO2. This extreme care results in pure, pristine wines that are MIND-BENDINGLY good, bursting with life and energy. Like this single-vineyard St. Romain Rouge, which slowly evolves in the glass, opening with bright red fruit and a Beaujolais-like charm before tightening into a very serious, savory, earthy, floral wine with a long, lingering finish. Will age beautifully if you can keep you have the willpower to put it aside for a few years...

### **NV Jean Velut Brut Premier Temps \$45**

Region: Aube < Champagne < France

Grapes: 80% chardonnay, 20% Pinot Noir

Vineyard/Cellar Stats: Organic farming, 20-50 year old vines on chalky clay soils; fermentation and aging in cement tank for 12 months; 6 grams per liter of dosage; low added SO2 at bottling

Winemaker: Jean Velut

We love Champagne but don't drink it that often because it's sooo expensive – we get our bubble fix year-round from quirky and affordable Pet'Nats. But this time of year, we crave the real deal, so we seek out at least one great organic grower Champagne that meet our "clean" standards and don't break the bank. This year's discovery is a small family estate in Montgueux, in the Aube, a formerly unknown satellite commune of Champagne where people grew grains and some grapes for house wine. That is, until the early 1970s

when Champagne started gaining mass popularity, and Jean Velut realized that he was sitting on perfect terroir for growing Chardonnay to meet that demand. For Montgueux sits is a massive outcropping of chalk jutting out from the flat fields of wheat, and Chardonnay loves chalk. Jean's original vines were on the plain, but he, along with a handful of mavericks, began planting up the steep, chalky slopes to find more sun and less frost. Since then, Jean's son Denis and now grandson Benoit have continued to work this land and make fantastic, clean Champagne. Benoit recently transitioned the estate to fully organic practices – not easy in the cold, wet Champagne region. They do everything themselves (there's just one full-time employee), from plowing in between the rows (to avoid herbicides), to riddling the bottles. This is bright, elegant and precise Champagne, it's sharp Chardonnay edges softened by the addition of the rounder, softer Pinot – we love how light and clean it finishes, with no yeasty, brioche notes weighing it down. A crowd-pleasing, wallet-friendly, organic Champagne for the holidays – what's not to love?