



CHAMPAGNE & EVERYTHING THAT SPARKLES

You've probably heard "if it doesn't come from the Champagne region of France, it's not Champagne". While Champagne is truly a magnificent beverage, there is so much more to choosing the right sparkling wine.

It's true, Champagne evokes feelings of celebratory glee and luxury. A good Champagne is pale yellow, without any sign of murkiness, and gives off notes of freshly baked bread and subtle fruit. The mouthfeel should be mellow, yet crisp, with a tight netting of tiny bubbles. In other words, exquisite.

So, what makes French Champagne so special (besides the

reputation and price tag)? There are a lot of rules when it comes to making Champagne. First, the rule everyone knows, the wine **MUST** be produced in the Champagne region of France to be called Champagne. Other rules in place include: only certain types of grapes can be used; certain pruning methods must be followed; a maximum number of vines can be planted per acre; a minimum alcohol content must be present in newly harvested grapes; fermentation must occur in the bottle; and finally non-vintage Champagne must be aged a minimum of 15 months, while vintage Champagne must be aged a minimum of 3 years. With so many rules to follow, it's no wonder winemakers are so particular about bottles being labeled "Champagne".

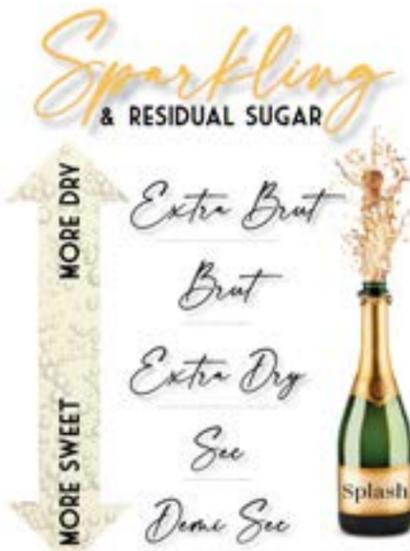
Some people believe you need to spend hundreds of dollars on a bottle of Champagne to get a serviceable bottle. If you literally have money to burn or you are investing in a bottle to put away to pop open on your 50th anniversary, by all means, spend your money. But, if you are like us, and want to celebrate with a glass of bubbly because the laundry got done, then you need to spend wisely.

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CHAMPAGNE & EVERYTHING THAT SPARKLES +



Splash Wines' go to French Champagne is Cottet-Dubreuil. It is everything you want in a French Champagne. It's got that exquisite lightly toasted yeast on the nose and the tiny bubbles will dance in your glass and mouth. In blind taste

tests (conducted moderately scientifically with our Champagne loving family and office staff), it has gone toe to toe with big producers, like Cristal (which retails at \$300+) and won. We like to say that it pairs well with any celebration. It retails around \$80 (a screaming deal for a high-quality Champagne), but Splash members get it for under \$25 a bottle.



EVERYTHING ELSE:

Working and living with a family that LOVES all things wine, there are certain boundaries you don't cross, like thinking there is a sparkling better than real Champagne. Well folks, real talk, given the choice between a Champagne and our Divino Oro Sparkling Brut- I usually choose the latter. Crazy, I know (and I know there are some people that would fight me on this, but the great thing about wine is that taste is so subjective, and no one is wrong). How can a sparkling from Spain



stand up to a REAL French Champagne?!?!? Here's my argument:

- 1. TASTE:** Divino Oro is made in the "methode champenoise", the same technique used to make French Champagne. Unlike some sparkling wines, where carbon dioxide is injected into the bottle, Divino Oro ferments in bottle, just like Champagne. It is on the drier side, with the same toasty/yeasty notes that I look for in Champagne. And the itty-bitty bubbles seem to last forever. Legit, I am a value shopper and if the Costco brand tastes the same for less, you better believe I am buying it, which leads me to my next point.
- 2. VALUE:** Even less expensive Champagne comes with a price tag that I am not always willing to pay. Divino Oro is a ridiculous good deal. It retails at around \$19.95 a bottle, but Splash members get it for as low as \$9 a bottle.
- 3. USES:** Because Divino Oro Cava Brut tastes great and doesn't make my wallet cry, I use it whenever I am hosting a gathering. I have served it in flutes on New Year's Eve and I have served it with an array of juices for Mimosas at baby showers and engagement party brunches. It's so versatile. Check out my cocktail recipe in this issue using this sparkling wine!

So, bottom line, if you are searching for Sparkling, Splash Wines has you covered.

IT'S A FIG DEAL COCKTAIL

If you like herbaceous, refreshing and a smidgen sour (think tangy, pickled flavors), look no further- this cocktail is for you! This recipe takes a little preparation because the shrub takes at least overnight in the fridge to develop. What's a shrub? A shrub is a mixture of sugar, vinegar and fruit that steeps or ferments overnight in the fridge to create a "drinking vinegar". Stick with me! This mixture is so flavorful, multi-use (can be used for cocktails OR added to sparkling water) and lasts up to 3 weeks!

INGREDIENTS:

For the shrub:

- ¾ cup of white sugar
- 1 cup of apple cider vinegar
- 8 springs of fresh thyme
- 2 cups of diced figs

For each cocktail:

- 1 oz of vodka
- ½ oz fresh lime juice
- 1 ½ oz shrub mixture
- 2 oz Cava Brut (Divino Oro Cava Brut)
- Extra figs, limes, thyme for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) To prepare the shrub, mix all shrub ingredients in a glass bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Place in fridge overnight. The next morning, strain the mixture and throw out the figs and thyme.
- 2) To make the cocktail, place crushed ice in a shaker and top with vodka, lime juice, and shrub. Give it a shake and strain (you can leave the ice if that's your preference). Pour into a glass of your choice (we think a champagne flute makes for a beautiful presentation). Top with Cava Brut and garnish.



CHEERS AROUND THE WORLD

One day (hopefully soon), we will be travelling this beautiful world again. One of the best ways to make friends is to know how to say a few phrases in the language of the country you are visiting. Toast like a local with these words (and pronunciations):

German: "prost!" (Prohst)

Japanese: "kanpai!" (Kan-pie)

Spanish: "salud!" (Saw-lood)

Portuguese: "saúde!" (Saw-ood-eh)

Mandarin: "Gan bei!" (Gon-bay)

Swedish: "skål!" (Skawl)

Italian: "salute!" (Sa-lutay)

Polish: "na zdrwoie!" (Nah z-drov-yay)

French: "santé!" (Sawn-teh)

Greek: "yiamas!" (Ya-mas)



MEET THE TEAM

AMBER, CUSTOMER SERVICE REP

AMBER, WALK US THROUGH YOUR DAY

"I start every day with a cup of coffee (before my shift starts of course) & a smile! First & foremost I get back to all the emails in my inbox, & make sure to take ownership of whatever the request may be. As the calls roll in, I always look forward to the interesting conversations, or even the potential issues that I can learn & grow from! There is so much that goes into this process to make the magic happen & always room to improve professionally as well as personally! I never leave having a bad day, that truly says something about Splash Wines and the wonderful customers I have the pleasure to work with."

TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOURSELF OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICE...

"You can often find me in the kitchen experimenting with possible creations (and sometimes failures)! I love to cook & am working on my baking skills. With normal activities at a low this last year with everything going on, I purchased some new art supplies

& have found some peace with creating art! In the summer you can find me camping or on the river, fishing."

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE WINE WE HAVE AT SPLASH?

"My go-to Red is the Radford Dale Syrah. The earthy, heavy tones just set it apart to me!"

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST THING YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM IT?

"Don't judge a bottle by its label or price! You will truly be surprised if you try a wine with an open mind since there can be a lot of stigmas within the wine community. Forgo those & make your own opinion based on your second sip."

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD TO PAIR WINE WITH THAT YOU USUALLY WOULD BE EMBARRASSED TO SHARE?

"Hot wings & Syrah...the spice to the Syrah doesn't really balance with the wings but it is a combination I enjoy!"

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

Pans Labyrinth

WHAT IS ONE RANDOM FACT ABOUT YOU THAT NOT VERY MANY PEOPLE KNOW?

I worked on a fishing boat in Alaska catching Black Cod & Halibut!

WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO KARAOKE SONG?

*Southern Nights
By Glen Campbell*



ReWINEd CRAFTS

by Daintry T., Operations Assistant

CORK TRIVET

Did you enjoy wine throughout the holidays and have an abundance of corks laying around the kitchen? Make something useful for putting your hot pans and pots on with your leftover wine corks. Here's how!

MATERIALS:

- Wine Corks
- Hot glue gun/hot glue sticks
- Parchment paper or aluminum foil

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: Use parchment paper or an foil sheet to cover your workspace. Then separate corks into categories. Try to organize corks into piles of the same size and thickness. *We don't advise using any plastic or foamy/rubbery corks for this project

Step 2: Layout corks in your desired pattern

Step 3: The first design I made was square, building rows with corks in different directions. The trick here was making sure all sides of each cork get glued so it holds. Use a book or something heavy in between gluing rows to help keep it flat. It is important to use corks



that are the same length and width for this design. Laying it out helped me see where I could have had problems and work out my perfect design

Step 4: The second design I made was a zig-zag pattern. This pattern needed corks of equal size and height AND laying out the pattern before gluing was super important. Keep adding rows until you reach the desired size. Use the weight of a book on the corks to keep them flat.

Step 5: Let dry overnight or 24 hours, before using.





A CARB LOVER'S GUIDE TO WINE AND PASTA PAIRING

I have yet to discover a carb that I don't love. Fresh croissants from a corner bakery in Paris? Don't mind if I do! A big bowl of steaming hot rice? Yes, ma'am! But the pièce de resistance for me is pasta. Is there anything better than a beautiful plate of homemade pasta? Rustic yet skillfully crafted, homemade pastas and sauces are an artform. I would argue that the only way to put the proverbial cherry on top would be to add a stunning glass of perfectly paired wine.

Here at Splash, we are not snooty about what you pair with your wine; if it tastes good together, enjoy! That said, we have found that some varietals really shine when paired with the right flavors. Let's jump right into the nitty-gritty.



TOMATO-BASED PASTA DISHES

I have to start with the quintessential classic: tomato-based pastas. Since tomato sauce is naturally acidic, they pair best with medium-bodied red wines (if your wine tastes bland with your pasta dish, you need to go up to a heartier wine). Our suggestion for meatless dishes: Grenache, like El Primero Granacha, Pinot Noir, like Angela Estate Pinot Noir, or Zinfandels. If you add meat, we suggest moving to a heartier red: Cabs, like Sishaye Cabernet Sauvignon, or Merlot, like Atardecer de los Andes Merlot-Malbec.

CHEESE-BASED PASTA DISHES

Is there a more classic combo than cheese and wine? Of course not! So the pairings with cheesy pasta dishes are close to endless. Our favorites are: light-bodied whites, like a crisp



South African Chardonnay, such as Radford Dale Chardonnay, or a light-bodied red, like Villa de Mare Sangiovese.



SEAFOOD PASTA DISHES

Prawns, clams, lobster, crab... oh the deliciousness! The last thing you want to do is overpower the freshness and delicate flavors of seafood, so a crisp, dry white wine is the way to go. We suggest: light to medium-bodied whites, like Binya Station Pinot Grigio or a drier rose, like Viba Rose.

PESTO-BASED DISHES

The earthy, green flavors of parsley, mint, basil and garlic are perfectly complimented by light to medium-bodied white wines. We recommend: a Chenin Blanc, like Sishaye Chenin Blanc or a Grenacha Blanc, like Chiens Catlans Blanc.



SPLASH DOGS ELLIOT IMESON

We'd like to introduce Elliot Imeson, the K-9 companion of Garrett Imeson, Splash Chief Marketing Officer, Bailey Imeson, Splash Marketing and Design and her tiny humans, Oliver (5 years old) and Sawyer (18 months).



"Ellie was our first baby. Garrett had a Border Collie growing up and knew that Type-A people like us would do great with a super smart breed. Ellie is a Border Collie/Australian Shepard mix from a local feed store. It was absolutely love at first sight- she was the only puppy to curl up and go to sleep on Bailey's feet at the meet-and-greet. We've never known a smarter dog.

She has a far better understanding of the English language than both of our kids until at least the age 3. She loves to have a job and herding is her absolute fav- it can be goats and chickens on the grandparent's property, toys or small children at the local park. More than anything, she absolutely loves babies and has been within arms reach of both kids since birth."

AGE: 9 years old

BEST FRIEND: Any small child (especially if they may drop food)

FAVORITE TREAT: Crumbs under the highchair

BEST TRICK: Perfectly rounding up a "herd" of chickens

FAVORITE THING TO DO AT

WORK: Get Super Overexcited When She Hears Everyone's Voices On The Daily Zoom Meeting

SQUEAKY OR BOUNCY

TOY: Any plush toy that once belonged to one of her tiny humans



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WHAT'S WITH ALL THE STYLES OF WINE GLASSES?

Last Spring, before the world went sideways, we planned to host our first real, grown-up wine tasting party, aka we were serving cheese from the expensive section of grocery store, none of the plates and utensils were disposable and we invited our friends who drink wine more than just casually (i.e., these are people who have done wine tourism trips through Italy).

I went to Target and stood staring at boxes of wine glasses; there were so many options. We wanted the event to look and feel legitimate, but I wasn't looking to take a second mortgage out on the house for glassware, so here's the BIG question: How many wine glasses do you really need?

HERE IS THE CONDENSED ACADEMIC REASON FOR HAVING DIFFERENT GLASSES FOR EACH VARIETAL:

THE REDS:

CABERNET: The glass is tall, with a wide bowl and narrower mouth meant to intensify the experience. The large bowl allows the wine to

breathe, while the narrower mouth captures the aromas.

BURGUNDY: The glass is wide from start to finish. This is meant to allow the drinker to smell the more delicate aromas and to allow the tip of the tongue to experience the wine first.

BORDEAUX: The glass is super tall and relatively narrow. Great for full-bodied wines (like Merlots and Cabs). Apparently, the height of the glass helps get the wine to spread more quickly through the mouth, which is great for experiencing big or young wines.

ZINFANDEL: A little shorter and with a wider mouth than Bordeaux glasses. This allows the drinker to experience the full flavor and aromas of the wine.

PINOT NOIR: The widest bowl of any wine glass, allowing the wine to really breathe. The rim is slightly turned out, which gives the wine flavors and aroma direct access to the drinker's nose and full mouth.

ROSÉ: These glasses have a long stem, which keeps the heat from your hand from warming up the wine. The best rosé glasses have a flared rim, which gets the often younger wine right to your sweet-sensitive taste buds.

THE WHITES:

CHARDONNAY: This glass is U-shaped and has a relatively wide mouth, which allows this commonly young wine to hit the tip and sides of the tongue, so the user can experience the slight sweetness.

SPARKLING: Narrow and upright, this glass is distinctive. The narrow body promotes the wine to stay sparkling, where as a wider glass would allow the carbonation to go flat faster.

SWEET/DESSERT: These are the relatively itty-bitty glasses for serving small servings of ultra-sweet/higher alcohol content wines. The narrow mouth sends the wine to the back of the mouth so the sweetness isn't overwhelming.

Back to the BIG question at hand: How many wine glasses do you really need (or want, for that matter)?



THE TAKE-AWAY:

- Thinner rims allow the wine to flow into the mouth better and heighten the experience. They feel more expensive (and are). They are obviously more fragile as well. We are not delicate people. We gesticulate when we tell stories and we rarely remember to set the glass down first. These glasses are not for our house.

- U-shaped glasses that are slightly smaller are generally for white wines.
- Crystal glasses look fancy (the minerals refract the light beautifully), but don't change the flavor, so if Grandma didn't will you some, don't spend the extra money. Glass gets the job done.
- If you are doing a tasting, you can always have guests rinse their glasses before pouring the next wine, to save on the number of glasses needed.
- If you regularly drink one varietal, go ahead and splurge on glasses for that varietal. But if you drink lots of varietals, there is a better way... Invest in 2 basic sets:

- A generic red wine glass: we like the balloon glasses. They have a large bowl that allows for excellent swirling opportunities and gives reds the space they need to breathe. They are also immensely Instagram-able and make the drinker feel super fancy. Look for long stems and a solid base.
- A generic white wine glass: a classic u-shaped glass with long stems will do the trick. The slightly narrower rim allows the drinker to get more of the delicate aromas of whites. You can use these for rosés as well.
- Optional: A set of sparkling/ Champagne flutes. Look for a long stem so your hand doesn't heat up your drink.

JUST A SPLASH

A LETTER OF THANKS FROM OUR FOUNDER



Splash was very fortunate in 2020 because our biggest challenge as a company was figuring out how to deal with growing over 4X nearly overnight. Obviously, that is a problem that everyone would want—particularly compared with what so many people around the world experienced—so we will always be grateful and never forget to keep that in perspective. But it was also clear early on that our business was in danger of collapsing under the weight of sheer volume. In fact, I am convinced that we would have disappeared were it not for our great and insightful team, so many fantastic partners and, most importantly, our amazing customers.

The Splash culture has always been to focus on fanatical customer service but in the first

weeks of the shutdowns—when our customers needed us the most—we found ourselves failing to live up to our own standard. Suddenly, wineries could not find the wine to meet our needs and our fulfillment team struggled to keep facilities operational. Orders that always shipped in one day were suddenly taking three weeks, emails that we always got answered in 24 hours were taking 24 days. It wasn't looking good for Splash because our core competency was suddenly in question.

Accordingly, in the height of the crisis, we quadrupled our customer service team and launched new initiatives with strategic partners and wineries, all designed to make sure we could get back to delivering on our promise to provide great value and always exceed customer expectations.

It didn't happen overnight. We were working 24/7 to get back on track but April and May were difficult—many days it seemed (and it was true!) that we were losing rather than gaining ground. Honestly, the only thing that gave us energy at the low points were our customers that we felt we were letting down.

So many of you exhibited so much patience and shouted so much encouragement that we literally lived off that energy. By mid-summer we were back on track so much so that now we can confidently say that the new normal is even better than the old normal when it comes to keeping promises and beating expectations. In fact, this past holiday we did more business than in all of 2019 and the best part of that is that we didn't let you down in the process. Orders were delivered on time; problems were addressed in a timely fashion and we hope we played a small role in making your holiday just a little bit brighter.

We always knew that our customers are what make Splash the great company we are but your patience, perseverance, loyalty and understanding in 2020 set a new standard for excellence that we will never forget. We are so lucky to have been able to count each of you as part of our family. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Rob Imeson,
CEO & Splash Founder