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GROW

Grower Champagnes have helped boost the popularity of the category,
and leading the way is Jacquesesson, now owned by François Pinault

OVER THE past couple of years, Champagne producers have enjoyed record -breaking success, shipping over 320 million bottles in 2022 and crossing the €6 billion revenue mark for the first time ever. By extension, the region has also become increasingly more important in iDealwine auctions, where it placed fourth in terms of value (+122%) and fifth in terms of volume (+55%) in 2022. Embedded in this recent triumph is the overarching success of Grower Champagnes. While many Champagne houses source grapes from dozens of vineyards outside of their own properties, Grower Champagnes are produced using almost exclusively estate-owned grapes (with a small allowance of 5% for non-estate-owned). Although they make up

only a small percentage of the region’s production, Grower Champagnes are quickly becoming more popular. Champagne enthusiasts have come to appreciate what they view as a window into the distinct nuances of each terroir and vintage, something that is typically uncommon in non-vintage Champagne production. By contrast, the strict production methods and multi-vineyard approach that is common to many non-vintage Champagnes bottles tend to ensure a higher level of consistency. This consistency is often referred to as the ‘house style’. In 2022 iDealwine auctions, the increasing popularity of Grower Champagnes was evident, as they represented seven out of the top 20 best-

selling producers. Sitting at number 15 on this list is Jacquesesson, an emblematic producer of Grower Champagne, whose name graced the front of no fewer than 156 bottles in 2022, for a total value of over €24,000. The name Jacquesesson carries a rich and interesting history spanning two centuries. Created in 1798, the Jacquesesson family made a name for itself in the early half of the 19th century by way of two major events. The first was a gold medal awarded by Napoleon Bonaparte, for whom Jacquesesson was said to be his favourite Champagne. The second was the invention of what is perhaps one of the most overlooked nuggets of engineering in the history of wine – the muselet. This is the small, wired cage that

auction update – in association with iDealwine

Top five Champagnes of June 2023, adjusted to 750ml bottle							
Colour	Lot description	Starting price	Lot selling price	Unit selling price	La Cote iDealwine®	% change	Buyer's profile
Sparkling white	1 bottle Jacques Seloisse Blanc de Blancs Extra-Brut 2002	€1,628	€1,628	€1,628	€1,227	33%	Pro – United States
Sparkling white	1 bottle Salon Cuvée S 2012	€1,188	€1,188	€1,188	€1,189	0%	Private – United Kingdom
Sparkling white	1 bottle Salon Cuvée S 2007	€1,002	€1,064	€1,064	€1,042	2%	Private – Hong Kong
Sparkling white	1 bottle Salon Cuvée S 1999	€1,002	€1,064	€1,064	€1,052	1%	Private – Czech Republic
Sparkling white	1 bottle Substance Jacques Seloisse 2016	€689	€689	€689	€689	0%	Private - Hong Kong

surrounds the corks of sparkling wine bottles all over the world. This universally recognisable piece of engineering was created in 1844, by Adolphe Jacquesesson. During Adolphe’s leadership, Jacquesesson’s production volume eclipsed one million bottles per year. However, following his death in 1876, the company entered a long period of perceived decline, changing ownership on many occasions until it was bought by Jean Chiquet in 1974. From 1990 until 2022, Jacquesesson was managed by Chiquet’s sons, Jean Hervé and Laurent, who instituted many important changes. These included the introduction of organic agriculture, fermentation in oak barrels, and a voluntarily limited production volume.

UNRIVALLED PASSION

Finally, in December 2022 the property was purchased by François Pinault. Pinault now counts Jacquesesson among his impressive collection of labels, which combine to form Artémis Domaines. The group’s managing director, Frédéric Engerer, has a proven hands-on leadership style, and an unrivalled passion for wine. He is renowned for his work at Château Latour, where he has acted as both managing director and cellar master at the same time. Today, Jacquesesson’s bread and butter is their cuvée 700 series. Hoping to elicit as much distinctiveness and originality as possible, each cuvée in the 700 series focuses on one vintage, with small amounts of reserve wine blended in. The grapes are sourced exclusively from five classified crus, including the Grands Crus Avize, Oiry, and Aÿ, and the Premier Crus Dizy and Hautvillers. The blend is

primarily Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, with smaller amounts of Pinot Meunier. Since the original 728 cuvée was introduced in 2000, each subsequent year has featured a new addition to the series. In 2022 iDealwine auctions, the average bottle of 700 series sold for €82.70. The highest-priced bottle was a Cuvée 736 Dégorgement Tardif Extra Brut, which was based on the 2017 vintage, and sold for €163.30 per bottle (from a lot including three bottles). Although the 700 series presents a unique primary cuvée for Jacquesesson, they do not typically constitute the producer’s highest-priced wines at auction. Instead, the top spots are usually occupied by plot-specific vintage Champagnes from mature vintages. In 2022, the three highest-priced bottles of Jacquesesson sold in iDealwine auctions were: a 2002 Magnum Aÿ Vauzelle Terme (€403 when scaled to 750ml), a 1989 Avize DT (€396.80), and a 1990 Avize DT (€372). Similarly, the highest-priced bottle of Jacquesesson sold in 2023 so far is a 2002 Aÿ Vauzelle Terme, which sold on iDealwine in January for €347. As an emblematic Grower Champagne, Jacquesesson’s resumé features a unique blend of recent innovation and historical prestige. It has displayed an admirable willingness to re-examine its own production methods, always striving for the perfect representation of terroir. Its acquisition by Pinault will help it continue this quest for perfection, in the vineyard and in the cellar. However, the resulting price increases will need to be considered as well. As for the future of Grower Champagne overall, with a strong start to 2023 and world-class producers like Jacquesesson at the helm, the outlook certainly looks bright.

About iDealwine.com

- Founded in 2000, iDealwine is France’s top wine auctioneer and leading online wine auction house worldwide.
- Fine Spirits Auction (FSA) is iDealwine’s dedicated spirits platform, launched in partnership with La Maison du Whisky, a French specialist in high-end spirits since 1956. Seven auctions of the finest whisky, rum, Cognac and more take place annually.
- Based in Paris, and with offices in Bordeaux and Hong Kong, iDealwine sources rare bottles from European cellars, private collections, and direct from producers before meticulously authenticating and shipping to enthusiasts, collectors, and trade customers worldwide.
- iDealwine provides wine and spirits market data and analysis, with over 60,000 price estimates, based on more than three million auction prices.
- If you are keen to sell your wines or spirits then check out iDealwine’s current auctions, sales, and price estimates at www.idealwine.com or at FineSpirits.Auction

