

## XYZ Featured Winemaker: Michel Egly, Ambonnay, France

“Champagne has the taste of an apple peeled with a steel knife...”

Aldous Huxley

Michel Egly produces his wines in one of only 17 Grand Cru Villages in Champagne. In total, Grand Cru vineyards make up a mere 8.6% of total vineyard space throughout Champagne. Ambonnay, the village where Michel makes his wines, is located in the Montagne de Reims due east of Épernay. His tiny 7 hectares of vines (roughly 17 acres) sit on perfectly exposed south facing hillsides. This exposure gives Michel the distinct advantage of sunshine throughout the day and helps him to achieve exceptional ripeness levels in the far northerly climates of Champagne. His vineyards on average are over 40 years old...with some parcels pushing towards their 65th birthday (older vines are prized for their ability to bring forth small quantities of fruit with incredible concentration.) Add this all up and the results are incredibly rich and lush Champagnes that you have to experience to believe. Maybe this is why famed wine critic Robert Parker calls Egly's wines "his house Champagnes." When you consider that over 200,000 cases of Dom Perignon are made in any given vintage year and that Michel makes a mere 4000 cases a year for all his wines, you begin to understand how truly rare these amazing wines are.

### Wines Available

***"Les Vignes de Vrigny," Premier Cru, Brut N.V. disgorged in July 2006***  
**132**

This is the second release of Michel's 100% Pinot Meunier cuvée from a small parcel of a 45 year old vineyard in the village of Vrigny. Full of pepper, cinnamon, and brown sugar notes with bright fruits and a briochy oatmeal characteristic that is classic Pinot Meunier. Try it while you can...

***"Rosé," Grand Cru, Brut N.V. disgorged in September 2005***  
**196**

With each new release, Egly's Rosé keeps getting better and better. Made by blending small amounts of still Pinot Noir into the wine, this cuvée boasts fresh aromas of wild strawberries, currant, rose petals, and violets with a spicy toast characteristic on the finish. A Rosé Champagne with very few peers.

***"Vieillessement Prolongé," Grand Cru, Extra Brut N.V. disgorged in May 2005***  
**198**

"Vieillessement Prolongé" stands for prolonged aging. This wine spent 70 months aging on its lees before being disgorged. 50% vintage wine from 1998 and 50% vintage wine from 95, 96, and 97, this wine is finished in a unique "extra brut" style. Another amazing release from Egly that is utterly unique...

***"Blanc de Noirs," Vieilles Vignes, Grand Cru, Brut N.V. disgorged in July 2003***  
**198**

If you have ever had the opportunity to taste Bollinger's "Vieilles Vignes Françaises," you won't want to miss this wine. 100% Pinot Noir from 50 year old vines in the lieu-dit "Les Crayeres," (a vineyard prized for its chalky soils). Leave the marquee labels for the pop stars and make this your next favorite bubbly.

**"Prestige Millésime," Grand Cru, Brut 1996/1998** disgorged in July 2004/July 2006  
**232/248**

Finally free from a mind boggling 85 months aging on its lees, this cuvée is a testament to the spec-tacular vintage. Like their non vintage, this is 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay from 50 year old vines. Red fruits, blueberries, honey, and floral aromas abound in these amazing wines...a monument to the genre.