

HOW TO READ A CHAMPAGNE LABEL

Champagne is a particularly confusing kind of wine. First, it's a place; next it's a word we all use to describe sparkling wine. True Champagne comes from one part of France. As with all Old World wines, the label holds important information that will help you choose a wine that appeals to you, so spend a moment to look closely and learn about the wine behind the label.

The region (Champagne is a region that takes its name from the same word as campaign, and is typified by rolling hills.)

The winery's location, in this case, one of the most important towns in Champagne

Most Champagne firms produce a wide range of wines, from off-dry "demi-secs" and "extra dries", to drier "bruts" and occasionally "nature" bubbly that have zero sweetness.



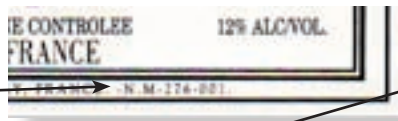
Official government approval (Highly regulated by the French government and a model for the rest of the world.)

A vast amount of Champagne is sold to export markets.

U.S. mandate

EU mandate

Big difference. (Most Champagne firms are "NM", negociant-brokers. Occasionally you'll be lucky enough to find an "RM", a harvesting broker. He owns his own vines. This quality detail is submerged on many labels to avoid embarrassing the powerhouse producers.)



The letters stand for *negociant-manipulant*, and *recoltant-manipulant*.

Champagne Bottle Sizes

Name	Vol in LTRS	Btl Equiv.
Quarter	18.75 cl	1/4
Half-Bottle	37.5 cl	1/2
Bottle	75 cl	1
Magnum	1.5 l	2
Jeroboam	3 l	4
Rehoboam	4.5 l	6
Methuselah	6 l	8
Salmanazar	9 l	12
Balthazar	12 l	16
Nebuchadnezzar	15 l	20



What's dry? Remember that Extra Dry means the opposite of what it says, and stands for an off-dry style of Champagne.

