

WINE OF THE WEEK

Champagne Countdown: Rich Berry Ripeness

by [Joshua Greene](#) • December 24, 2021



As we count down to a new year, here are some Champagne picks from Joshua Greene's recent tasting report to pop as the ball drops (or beforehand if you don't feel like waiting)!

Recently, Gilles Descôtes, Bollinger’s *chef de cave*, challenged his winemaking team to create a blanc de noirs exclusively from pinot noir, hoping to give their Vieilles Vignes Française “a little brother,” less rare and more accessibly priced. Each member, including Descôtes, developed their own concepts, all tasted blind. Descôtes’ blend won. It became a starting point for the first release of the new wine—the 2015 PN VZ; the base wine focusing on Verzenay, as in, VZ. Descôtes fermented and aged half the lot in oak barrels and casks, versus La Grande Année, which he vinifies entirely in oak. This second release, the 2016 PN VZ, is, once again, based on fruit from Verzenay—all pinot noir, including the reserve wines. It’s as muscular as Bollinger’s classic vintage wines but with a rich berry-fruit component to fill it with ripeness. There’s a ghosting of red-wine tannins in the cinnamon and red-apple-skin flavors that last with focus and precision.

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Bollinger Champagne PN VZ16 Brut



\$130

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