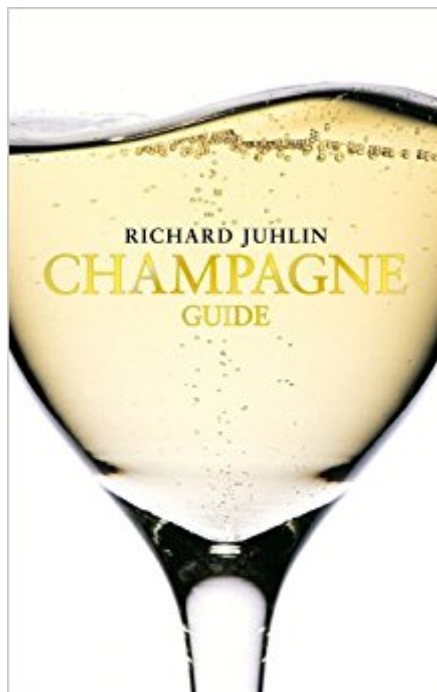


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# Juhlin's Champagne Guide



## Synopsis

Take Juhlin's best selling 4,000 Champagnes, add three years of dedicated tasting and 2,500 more sparkling wines and you have the most current, authoritative and comprehensive Champagne guide on the market. Simple to use, packed with information and loaded with Juhlin's engaging style, with this book you can make the most of your stay in Champagne, or your browsing experience in your local wine store. Richard Juhlin is the author of Great Tasting, 3000 Champagnes and 4000 Champagnes. He was awarded the Chevalier del Arc by the French government in 1997.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Candor in published evaluations of wines is too often missing. Certainly, it is easy to praise good wines but for a writer to say a wine is poor is rarely seen. One great advantage of Juhlin's evaluations is that he does not spare those who wines he finds unworthy. The *\*Champagne Guide\** is a buying guide. From *Abel* to *Waris et Chenayer*, Juhlin provides brief background notes on the wines of almost four hundred Champagne producers, with longer notes on major houses. For each producer where he has tasted the wines, he also provides ratings of the wines. This allows the reader to accomplish two things. First, he can quickly see what wines he may want to try. Second, by looking at Juhlin's evaluations of Champagnes with which he is already familiar, the reader can gain an understanding of how Juhlin's preferences compare with his own. This latter is especially valuable because, as Juhlin admits, not all wine drinkers like the same styles of wines. Indeed, I once had a person presenting a wine seminar tell me that she did not like Krug, it was too mature for her tastes. At the same time, any scoring system must be approached with an understanding of how it works. For those accustomed to reading scores in *Wine Spectator* or *Advocate* which use

ratings of 50-100 points, Juhlin's numerical scores might seem odd at first so it is important to understand his scale. As he explains in a chapter titled "The Producers," he uses a true one hundred point scale where an average wine receives fifty points. Thus, wines to which he gives 60 or 70 points should not be avoided and there are even interesting and enjoyable wines with scores in the 50s and 60s. An example of that might be the predominantly pinot meunier wines from Jean Moutordier. Before Juhlin ventures into his notes on the vintners and their wines he provides useful background information. First he gives his background so that the reader can better appreciate his perspective. Next are pointers on purchasing and storing Champagne. Then there are chapters on touring the Champagne region with recommendations on lodging and dining. Last there is an explanation of his rating system and a caution about bottle variation. These sections are followed by information about and ratings of the Champagne producers he covers. (This book is about Champagne. It has ten pages with some information about producers of sparkling wine other than Champagne. Other volumes, most notably Tom Stevenson's /World Encyclopedia of Champagne and Sparkling Wine/ should be looked to for information on sparkling wines produced elsewhere.) The notes on the lesser houses are brief. Those on the major producers or smaller vintners whose products Juhlin deems particularly important or influential can be extensive. G. Billiard gets four lines, Jacques Selosse gets two pages, Krug almost four pages. Houses which have been in existence for many years receive ratings not only for their current releases, but also for previous vintages. There are ratings for Veuve Clicquot back to 1919. It is amazing to realize how many glasses Juhlin must have raised to compile these notes. He says that he tasted more than 6500 different Champagnes. While I noted no wine to which he gave a single digit score, there was one at 25 points and another of whom he notes: "[his] non-vintage wines are no good at all, but the vintage wines are definitely up to standard." It is this unstinting candor which the \*Champagne Guide\* is an especially valuable reference. For yourself or for a friend who loves Champagne, Juhlin's book is a splendid guide to that effervescent beverage. It would be great gift for any occasion or holiday

--Harold Baer, Colorado Wine News

love this book!!

Mr. Juhlin has an updated guide of his huge (and hugely expensive) but outdated "4000 Champagnes" opus magnum, as it were. This is the book to take with you to Champagne or to your local shop. He knows his subject supremely. He presents the makers alphabetically. He provides a blurb on each, followed by details of all their recent offerings, with his ratings. I have yet to differ with

any to notable degree. I have had only about fifty or of his exhaustive listing (I find only one missing), but enough to give blind confidence to use as a purchasing guide to this pricey pastime. That is real value to me. As a guide, it is all it should be. If you want more detail on only the latest, it would be a good idea to subscribe to Parker's letter. But I would take Juhlin with me on site. He is more of a specialist than Parker. I just wish he made this a cheaper annual without the otherwise pleasing, high quality paper binding and enjoyable photographs. Useful maps. NB: If you are looking for sparkling wine, not made in Champagne proper, then go to Stevenson. And Parker is still a solid companion. But true Champagne has become more popular in the U.S., even though so many Champagne houses have a large California presence. We are now third in consumption behind the U.K. and the BBC.

While not as encyclopedic as his larger book, this is a great book to become more familiar with the various houses and growers in short summaries. I visited Champagnes soon after reading this book, and the travel guide in the beginning was quite useful, and him including the mixes of grape varieties that different places use with various vintages is helpful. The book is not too useful if you're interested in champagnes over 20 years old. The book is very portable and very easy to get through.

Always the most authoritative source of Champagne information. Shame it is updated so infrequently as it should be an annual review. Michael Edwards and Tom Stevenson take note

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