

UPROXX

It's Time To Pop Some Corks — The Best Champagnes For Late Summer Sipping

Champagne gets talked about a lot around the holidays — **New Year's Eve especially** — and then sort of drops off the radar for a lot of folks. Not us. Around these parts, it's **always champagne time**. Seriously, you should have **a bottle of champers** in the fridge year-round ready to be popped at any time. Especially during the dog days of summer, as champagne is the **ultimate thirst-quenching** summer refresher.

Today, I'm calling out ten bottles I like to keep on ice this time of year. But before we dive in, some context — **champagne** is a sparkling wine from the Champagne region of France. And since real champagne is an appellation product (legally tied to a region), there are some serious rules that make the sparkling wine "champagne." Very generally, the grapes have to be either Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, or Pinot Meunier grapes. After barrel aging, the juice needs to age in a cellar for a year and a half (at least) of secondary fermentation in the bottle with more yeast and rock sugar added. During that time, the bottles need to be "riddled" or rotated daily to help the wine mature properly.

Naturally, there are bazillion other minutiae level rules that apply. But that's a good start for now.

For this ranking, **I'm simply going on taste**. And, look, I'm a Bollinger ride-or-die fella. I have a bottle of their Brut and Rose in my fridge pretty much 365. I guess that's a bit of a spoiler alert for later. That said, I enjoy a lot of champagne in between my everyday pours for a lot of different reasons (from making cocktails to breaking the monotony of **sipping whiskey over and over**). So let's dive right in and find you a great bottle of champagne for some late summer sipping!

1. Bollinger Rosé

ABV: 12%

Average Price: \$92

The Champagne:

Bollinger is the other champagne from Aÿ that helped the region become so revered. It's also one of the most celebrated wines in the world from royal courts to the pages of James Bond adventures. The juice in this bottle is hewn from 62 percent Pinot Noir, 24 percent Chardonnay, and a mere 14 percent Meunier with over 85 percent of the wines coming from Grand crus and reserves. The achieve the faint rose color, about five percent red wine is added. Lastly, this wine is aged twice as long as the average champagne in general and every other one on this list.

Tasting Notes:

There's a distinct subtlety at play that's damn near divine as notes of wild strawberry mingle with mild woody and savory salal berries, sour cherries, tart black currants, and seedy blackberries as minor notes of red peppercorn and fern leaves sneak in. The palate has a hint of soft oak that's dipped in a tart blackberry cordial before a thin line of cherrywood drives the taste toward more salal and huckleberry with a dash of allspice lurking in the background. The end is pure silk with a tart brightness, a whisper of dryness, and a twinge of that woody and savory forest berry.

Bottom Line:

This is like walking through the woods and picking berries on a sunny day. It's just freaking delicious and fresh and a little funky. This is *the* champagne you should be drinking right now.

