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PRESS INFORMATION



CHAMPAGNE  
**ALFRED GRATIEN**  
DEPUIS 1864 À ÉPERNAY

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# Champagne Alfred Gratien

## Handcrafted and utterly unique

*"I have always believed that champagne should be to wine, what haute couture is to fashion."* (Alfred Gratien)

In 1864, Alfred Gratien transformed his life's dream into reality by founding a winery in Épernay, in the heart of Champagne country, in whose vaults the finest champagnes would mature. The entrepreneur and wine connoisseur realised his vision so successfully that *Alfred Gratien* is still prized as one of the best French champagne brands today.

Alfred Gratien was confident that combining superior craftsmanship with Champagne's best grapes would yield something extraordinary: a champagne that would set new standards. Even today, the tradition of selecting the finest grapes and producing champagne in small batches is one of the brand's indispensable hallmarks. In the best French tradition, it is quality, not quantity, that counts.



*Alfred Gratien* champagnes are unique due to the fact that they are exclusively vinified in small oak barrels. The fresh must that is created when the hand-picked grapes are pressed is fermented in 228-litre barrels. These small oak barrels - together with a few closely-guarded production secrets - give *Maison Alfred Gratien's* fine sparklers the typical dense and vinous structure that distinguishes them from other champagnes. *Alfred Gratien* is the only Maison to use this technique for all of its creations. Contact between the wine and barrel favours micro-oxygenation, which allows the wine's organoleptic properties to develop. This signature process is also what makes *Champagne Alfred Gratien* unique among its peers.

Four generations of the Jaeger family have guaranteed high standards of craftsmanship and thus the superior quality of Maison *Alfred Gratien* champagnes over the years. In fact, *Alfred Gratien's* artisanal expertise and style have been passed down from father to son for more than a century.

Nicolas Jaeger has been cellar master in Épernay since 2007. He was named "Winemaker of the Year" by the renowned French wine guide "Guide Hachette 2018" and is the fourth Jaeger family member in succession to hold this position. In 2018, Nicolas Jaeger was also named "Champagne Cellar Master of the Year 2018" in the famous "Les Trophées Champenois" competition, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the Champagne region's image.

Year after year, the champagne-making processes and techniques have remained the same, yet each new generation of cellar master has added his own personal touch. Nicolas Jaeger has also made certain fine adjustments to the cuvées. While the wines produced by his father were velvety and clear, those made by Nicolas Jaeger are expressive and beautifully rounded. To achieve this, Nicolas reworked the dosages to



produce more homogeneous cuvées. *Alfred Gratien's* style is distinguished by the unique combination of expert knowledge and each cellar master's personal touch.

To this day, the *Alfred Gratien* winery adheres to traditional artisanal techniques when producing its iconic champagnes. Highly regarded and considered to be synonymous with prestige and savoir vivre, they are often served on grand occasions.

The fine sparklers produced by *Alfred Gratien* are more than champagne. As a result of being aged in oak barrels for several years and their exceptional bouquets, all the *Alfred Gratien champagnes* deliver a memorable mouthfeel. However, the authentic knowledge that is passed down from one generation to the next like an ancient art, together with the work of the passionate cellar masters, who create the sophisticated cuvées, also make an important contribution to the success of the brand.

The company has been official purveyor to the Élysée Palace with *Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis Brut* and *Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis Rosé* since 2008. *Champagne Alfred Gratien* is one of the “World’s Most Admired Champagne Brands 2022”. It was ranked 21st worldwide by the 300 experts forming the global academy for the DRINKS International magazine’s ninth Most Admired Champagne Brands survey.



The judging panels of national and international awards regularly pay tribute to the consistently outstanding quality and incomparably fine bouquet of *Maison Alfred Gratien* champagnes. Some of the most recent include three “Gold” medals, two “Grand Gold” medals and one “Best of Show” medal at the renowned MUNDUS VINI Spring Tasting event in 2023, as well as the Berlin Wine Trophy 2023.

#### Berlin Wine Trophy 2023

*Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis 2013 (batch number 21 246): Gold*

#### MUNDUS VINI 2023

*Alfred Gratien Brut (batch number 22 333): Gold*

*Alfred Gratien Rosé Brut (batch number 22 333): Grand Gold and Best of Show Rosé Champagne*

*Alfred Gratien Millésimé 2009 (batch number 21 151): Gold*

*Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis 2013 (batch number 21 246): Grand Gold*

## Traditions set standards

### The champagne of hearts

The first step in the champagne-making process is the selection of the finest grapes. Each *Alfred Gratien* cuvée contains 62% grapes from grand cru and premier cru vineyards in the legally defined Champagne sub-regions of Montagne de Reims, Vallée de la Marne and Côte des Blancs. Some of the grapes originate from the Maison's own vineyards in Côte de Blancs, while others come from around 60 winegrowers who have been partners to the *Alfred Gratien* winery for decades. Like the Maison's cellar masters, some of these families have had supply agreements with *Alfred Gratien* for several generations. The winegrowers are experts when it comes to the Champagne grape varieties of Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir. Only healthy grapes are harvested and each consignment undergoes a rigorous inspection upon arrival. The meticulous care taken in the wine selection process is critical to the quality of the final product.



The winegrowers are treated like members of a large, caring family. Each has the opportunity to sample their wine in the months of January to March after the harvest, a ritual that fosters the close association with “their” product.

The first fermentation takes place in the cellars at Épernay. After pressing, the fresh must from the hand-picked grapes is fermented in small, 228-litre oak barriques (fûts). After this initial fermentation, every effort is made to preserve the original character of the wines. Importantly, none of the cuvées undergo malolactic fermentation. The malolactic process involves the introduction of additives to trigger deacidification and convert malic acid into lactic acid. While this gives the product a rounder taste, it also sacrifices some of the original flavour imparted to the wine by the unique climate and chalky soil. In the absence of malolactic fermentation, the delicate aromas of the precious grapes remain largely intact. The bottled wine is fermented into champagne in deep cellar vaults dating back to the 4th century. It is stored in blue light at a temperature of 9°C and constant humidity to ensure the optimum preservation of all the crus. Classic non-vintage cuvées are stored in the cellars for four years and vintage cuvées for at least ten. The Paradis cuvées are aged for between six and seven years. Maison *Alfred Gratien* has always used traditional wine corks to secure its vintage cuvées, which are cellared for several years.



Thanks to the experience and skill of Chef de Cave Nicolas Jaeger, the wines develop an inimitable flavour despite the preservation of the somewhat sharp malic acid. The malic acid also keeps the champagne fresh and young, ensuring that the product retains its youthful intensity and freshness for decades. Today, only very few wineries produce champagne entirely without malolactic fermentation.

Another traditional champagne-making technique is the use of a bottle with a *bague carrée* neck finish – a square lip on the mouth of the bottle that can only be secured with a natural cork. While other champagnes mature in bottles with crown caps, vintage champagne always undergoes secondary fermentation in bottles with a *bague carrée* finish. The permeability and flexibility of natural cork permits small amounts of oxygen to penetrate the wine, allowing it to breathe a bit for optimum maturation. There is a fundamental difference between champagnes of the same vintage and type sealed with crown caps and those sealed with natural cork. However, the use of corks does make it necessary to check every single bottle in the cellar for corkiness during the disgorgement process. By the way, every bottle of *Alfred Gratien champagne* is disgorged by hand.



Truly outstanding quality can only be attained by cellar masters who command every last detail of champagne production. At *Alfred Gratien*, the artisanal craft of champagne production in the *Alfred Gratien* cellar vaults is passed on from father to son.

However, commitment to this craft exacts a price and annual production at *Champagne Alfred Gratien* is limited to 300,000 bottles. Its dedication to tradition and quality over commerce, has earned *Champagne Alfred Gratien* a special reputation as the champagne of hearts.



## The Alfred Gratien portfolio

### Champagne for experts

Champagne is indubitably the most sparkling ambassador of the French way of life. The *Alfred Gratien* handcrafted champagnes are created rather than produced – and for that reason they are some of the finest the region has to offer.

*Champagne Alfred Gratien's* flagship product is *Brut Classique*. It perfectly embodies the Maison's style. For a Brut champagne it has an unusually well-developed, full-bodied and vinous flavour. The dominant grape variety is the fruity Champagne classic Chardonnay (45%), rounded off with Pinot Meunier (35%) and Pinot Noir (20%). Lively acidity is combined with floral notes for a long-lasting finish.

The classic champagne is supplemented with a fine rosé cuvée: *Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé* delicately combines the elegance of Chardonnay (45%) with the subtle fruitiness of Pinot Meunier (35%) and the vibrant character of Pinot Noir (20%). It is refreshingly dry with a delicate bouquet of pink grapefruit and red berry aromas, finishing with mineral and floral notes.



*Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Blanc de Blancs* is made exclusively from grand cru Chardonnay. Its bouquet is a marriage of complex aromas of vanilla and butter – finishing with a refreshing hint of citrus fruits. This champagne is distinguished by its elegance, fullness and richness.

*Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Millésimé* is a vintage champagne and, as such, only contains the grapes of a single vintage. These vintage champagnes are matured for anywhere between eight and over ten years before they are retailed. Despite their long maturation period, the vintage champagnes are all characterised by *Alfred Gratien's* signature freshness. The latest Millésimé 2007 has a distinctive golden colour and a nose of brioche, toasted almonds, candied orange, stewed pear and fine citrus.

“One sip of *Champagne Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis Brut* opens the Gates of Paradise” – is one of the winery’s longstanding sayings. Cuvée Paradis Brut is characterised by a delicate mixture of honey and nuts, with subtle hints of white fruits. It has a powerful and well-balanced palate, with a rounded finish. It represents a composition of grapes sourced exclusively from selected premier cru and grand cru vineyards.

A heavenly bouquet, intense colour and mildly fruity flavour make *Champagne Cuvée Paradis Brut Rosé* a truly outstanding sparkler. Abundant aromas of dried fruit and orange zest cede to a nose of fine gingerbread spice upon contact with oxygen.

The product range was relaunched with a new design in January 2023. A reworked crest that is paler in colour with a more exclusive look now adorns the label and the distinctive logo boasts a more modern and contemporary design. Alfred Gratien’s signature has been added to the label, as has the monogram in the crest, to underline the brand’s authenticity. The Alfred Gratien’s initials are also incorporated on the capsule, which boasts a new, paler colour.



# Alfred Gratien press photos

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AG\_Brut

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut is the Maison's signature product. It is a harmonious, smooth and complex champagne that is balanced enough to accompany nearly every course.



AG\_Brut\_Rose

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé is delicate, full-bodied, intense and elegant. It pairs well with fine ham and cheese, as well as with fruity desserts.



AG\_Blanc\_de\_Blancs

Champagne Alfred Gratien Blanc de Blancs is dynamic, pure and silky. It is the perfect accompaniment for shellfish and fish.



AG\_Brut\_Nature

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Nature is intense and forthright with a clean acidic finish. It is the ideal champagne for hearty and savoury foods such as lobster, dried ham or mature cheese.



AG\_Brut\_Millesime\_2012

Alfred Gratien Brut Millésimé 2012 is a complex yet perfectly balanced vintage champagne with a fruity and spicy bouquet. The lasting finish seduces the palate with aromas of wakame and black tea. It is the ideal choice for fish and meat.



AG\_Brut\_Millesime\_2015

A silky, aromatic vintage champagne distinguished by the complex aromas of white fruits, brioche and toasted buttery bread. An intense first nose is followed by a soft, silky and refreshing palate. This vintage champagne is an excellent pairing for langoustine, sea urchin, sweetbread or fillet of beef.



AG\_Cuvée\_Paradis\_Blanc\_2015

Champagne Alfred Gratien Cuvée Paradis Brut is a champagne with a complex structure. It lends itself well to fish, creamy poultry dishes and langoustine.

# Alfred Gratien press photos



Alfred\_Gratien\_Barrels

Several thousand oak barrels are stored in these cellars, where Champagne has been crafted and aged for centuries.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Barrel\_1

Vinification in oak barrels guarantees freshness, fruitiness and authenticity.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Barrel\_2

The fresh must from hand-picked grapes is fermented in 228-litre oak barriques, or fûts.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Brut\_Mood\_1

"I have always believed that champagne should be to wine, what haute couture is to fashion."  
(Alfred Gratien)



Alfred\_Gratien\_Brut\_Mood\_2

Alfred Gratien's craftsmanship and style have been passed down from father to son for more than a century.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Brut\_de\_Blancs\_Mood

Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Blanc is composed of the complex aromas of vanilla and butter with a hint of refreshing citrus to finish.

# Alfred Gratien press photos



**Alfred\_Gratien\_Mood\_1**  
With more than 20 years of experience, Nicolas Jaeger continues to hone the craft his family has been perfecting for generations.



**Alfred\_Gratien\_Nicolas\_Jaeger\_1**  
A true artist of his trade, Nicolas Jaeger assembles these outstanding Champagnes with consummate care and skill.



**Alfred\_Gratien\_Brut\_Mood\_3**  
Champagne production at Alfred Gratien is like that in any small, modern manufacturing facility distinguished by quality and uniqueness.



**Alfred\_Gratien\_Brut\_Rose\_Mood**  
Champagne Alfred Gratien Brut Rosé unites the elegance of Chardonnay with the zingy fruitiness of Pinot Meunier and the dynamic character of Pinot Noir.



**Alfred\_Gratien\_Cuvée\_Paradis\_Blanc\_2015\_Mood**  
Cuvée Paradis Brut is characterised by a delicate mixture of honey, nuts and subtle hints of white fruits. It has a powerful and well-balanced palate, with a rounded finish.

## Alfred Gratien press photos



Alfred\_Gratien\_Nicolas\_Jaeger

Nicolas Jaeger represents the fourth generation of Jaeger family members since 1905 to occupy the position of cellar master at Champagne Alfred Gratien.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Riddling\_Rack\_Detail

At Alfred Gratien, the bottles are stored on their sides during the ageing process and then placed on riddling racks.



Alfred\_Gratien\_Vineyard

Alfred Gratien has long-term sourcing agreements with its winegrowers. Some of these partnerships have existed for more than a century.

We would be happy to send you the photos shown here in print-ready quality. They are also available in the image database at [www.henkell-freixenet.com](http://www.henkell-freixenet.com)

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