

SUSTAINABILITY

Ruinart highlights connection between Champagne, harvest cycles via docuseries

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Ruinart's dive into the connection between harvesters and the harvest is presented against the backdrop of climate change. Image credit: Ruinart

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

LVMH-owned Champagne house **Ruinart** is exploring the human-to-land connection through wine.

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The brand released a mini-documentary series highlighting the various faces of wine harvesting, focusing especially on the relationship between growers and the land. Featuring sommelier commentary, the words of house growers and imagery of pruning practices, the series grounds vineyard work in a closeness to the land.

"Wine is about connections," said Tahira Habibi, sommelier, in a statement.

"You're connecting with the earth; you're connecting with the grapes; you're connecting with your team," Ms. Habibi said. "It's a team effort to decide this is going to be a vintage.

"It's all about connection."

Land connection

The Ruinart docu-series is a five-episode release, delving into Dom Ruinart 2010's tethers to the land.

Discussions of climate, ethical growing practices and geological viticulture appear throughout the episodes but is especially emphasized in the second episode. "Ep. 2 The Pace of Nature" focuses on those elements of vineyard work, with the episode before, "Ep. 1 The Roots of Creation" having touched on the bond between humans and earth.

DOM RUINART 2010 | Ep. 1 The Roots of Creation

Vineyard laborers and grape experts are shown tirelessly tending to the vines, working to harvest in a way that will be ideal for both the fruit and the humans who enjoy it.

Stretching beforehand, the workers mimic the twisting vines before beginning their long work day, as they seek to bring out the full potential of the grapes. This doesn't stop when it gets cold, as like the vines, the workers keep going.



Ruinart pruners stretch with the sunrise as they prepare to tend to the vines. Image credit: Ruinart

"It all starts in winter," said Frederic Panaoitis, cellar master at Ruinart, in a statement.

"With pruning that is key to give the future vintage its expression," said Mr. Panaoitis. "Each vine is different.

"It requires observation."

The deeply involved harvesting process is demanding, requiring growers to look many years ahead into the future when determining how to approach the pruning process. This level of anticipation requires a connection to the grapes themselves.

Ruinart explores this concept, speaking to the power of heritage and time in the process.

Describing wine as a "living product," the sommeliers and collectors featured in the documentary episodes speak to the fact that like humans and the land, wine is fluid in nature. It changes.



Ruinart acknowledges that wine is a living thing, nodding to the kinship between people and land. Image credit: Ruinart

Due to this living quality, wine acts as an intercessor between people and the land; a go-between positioned in the middle of human beings and the land that grew their grapes.

Wine prospers when the climate does. In other words, wine prospers when humans and the livable land does.

"Since sustainability issues [have] become more pressing, it is important to have a product that satisfies this concern," said Carlos de Jesus, head of marketing and communication of Amorim, in a statement.

"Of course the same goes for wine and champagne," Mr. de Jesus said. "It comes from a tree that was never harvested.

"It's very relevant today you want to [use] resources without destroying them."

Green grapes

Ruinart is working to honor that land connection through sustainable practices essentially giving back to the land that gave to the company.

Due to this plentiful mindset, the star of the series, the Blanc de Blancs 2010, has been named the best champagne in the world ([see story](#)).

Through [green viticulture](#) and the prioritization of forming a connection with the land, the brand has been able to prosper both in terms of product and ethical appeal.



Ruinart's commitment to sustainability is an acknowledgment of the climate crisis, and an embracing of the partnership between land and steward.
Image credit: Ruinart

French Cognac brand Hennessy is another brand that is recognizing the wealth that the land has granted the company. Upholding regenerative agriculture as the brand's standard, Hennessy is forging a deeper connection between the land and those who enjoy the land-grown beverages ([see story](#)).

"The luxury element of fine wines is the connection with different cultures," said Lewis Chester, wine collector, in a statement.

"You really need to go to the place," Mr. Chester said. "Until you go to the place, and you understand the people and the culture, and you visualize where those grapes [come from], you don't have the same connection."

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