

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Ruinart releases climate-conscious cuve

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Blanc Singulier's Edition 18 was specially created to reflect the environmental shifts taking place and what it means for viticulture. Image courtesy of Ruinart

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LVMH-owned Champagne house Ruinart is reacting to the shifting landscape in a tasteful way.

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The maison created the Blanc Singulier as a direct reflection of the climate crisis' effect on nature and Champagne-making. The 2018 Chardonnay, Edition 18, is now a permanent portfolio addition, marking a first-of-its-kind release for the brand that intentionally explores the industry's future through taste and production practices.

"2018 was an unusual year: because of a warm and sunny season, the vegetative cycle of the vine was very rapid, while the ripe and early harvest began in August," said Frdric Panaotis, cellar master at **Ruinart**, in a statement.

"These particular climatic conditions brought out different aromatic balances, reinforcing our conviction that these variations were bound to recur," Mr. Panaotis said. "We have therefore decided to conceive this unique cuve, to bear witness to the impact of climate change in Champagne."

Ecological reflection

As climate change worsens livable conditions for those around the world, the Champagne industry is in turn experiencing a massive shift.

The vine cycle has shortened and the pH of the soil is lessening, leading to increasingly more acidic wines as they do not have the time or conditions to ripen to full sweetness. Additionally, with the changing weather and temperatures, certain grapes are performing better than others.



Edition 18 has a complex taste, evoking white fruits and candied peels amidst an earthy backdrop of cardamom and rosemary. Image courtesy of Ruinart

Rather than continuing business as usual, as many global-scale wine names are attempting to do, Ruinart is letting nature lead with Edition 18.

Made entirely of Chardonnay, a grape variety that is especially sensitive to changes in climate, the Edition is available for purchase at Ruinart's boutique in Reims, France, and at slow food restaurants around the European country and the United States.

The maison will release new Editions of the Blanc Singulier as new Chardonnay profiles are identified. To achieve this, careful attention will be paid to the climate emergency taking place, keeping it in mind during end-of-harvest tastings during years that a change is detected, a new Edition of the cuve will be released.



All of Ruinart's products "will be affected" by the crisis at hand, but Blanc Singulier shows that it is affecting wines in an "increasingly tangible" way, per statements from the brand. Image courtesy of Ruinart

Each Blanc Singulier drop will mark a milestone in the unfolding climate crisis on the viticulture front.

The choice to create wines based on nature's transformation means that Ruinart will not have control over the release years, taking away the level of control that brands including ecologically-dependent ones generally enjoy.

This is a stark contrast to the current models in place within capitalism. Dependent on heavy consumption, companies tend to enforce their profit-first approaches, adding sustainability initiatives where there are gaps that can be filled rather than letting those efforts or nature's holding capacity take the wheel.



Edition 18 is aged for an extra year compared to the famed Blanc de Blancs wine, though made from grapes that spent less time on the vine. Image courtesy of Ruinart

While Ruinart is not completely switching all wines to reflect the climate's changes, Edition 18 is seemingly an experimental step in that direction.

As the environmental emergency worsens, harvesters and their brands around the world are already having to adapt to varying degrees ([see story](#)). Climate change has not forced Ruinart's hand yet, so this is an example of adaptation by choice, a preemptive embrace of the new landscape and a tangible show of belief that it can reinvent itself.

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