

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Caroline Fiot begins Cellar Master role at Ruinart

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Agricultural engineer and oenologist Caroline Fiot now guides the maison's portfolio, beginning her tenure as Cellar Master on Jan. 1. Image credit: Ruinart/Alice Jacquemin

By AMIRAH KEATON

LVMH-owned Champagne house Ruinart's winemaking team has a new leader.

Agricultural engineer and oenologist Caroline Fiot began her tenure as the maison's Cellar Master on Jan. 1. The transition follows the passing of Frdric Panaotis, who held the position since 2007.

"Transmission and excellence are core values at Maison Ruinart," said Frdric Dufour, president of **Ruinart**, in a statement.

"They uphold a savoir-faire nearly three centuries old, which continuously evolves and perfects itself," Mr. Dufour said. "We are delighted to welcome Caroline Fiot as our new Cellar Master."

Inheriting a legacy

Educated at Institut Agro in Montpellier, France, Ms. Fiot started her career in the country's Saint-milion vineyards before gaining international experience in the United States and Vietnam.

She later expanded her scientific and business training through the LVMH Chair program, the longest-standing program worldwide dedicated to luxury brand management, at France's ESSEC Business School, before joining the Ruinart team for the first time in 2016.

Ms. Fiot would go on to hold titles at other LVMH-owned houses, including Chandon Argentina in 2020, before returning to Champagne in 2021 to oversee Mot & Chandon's Mont Aigu winemaking site.

In 2024, she was promoted to head all winemaking facilities, managing blends from must reception through bottling for maisons under the Mot Hennessy wines and spirits division in pernay, France.



Ms. Riot returns to Ruinart to carry forward the house's focus on technical precision while adapting practices to climate change. Image credit: Ruinart

The researcher now returns to Ruinart to carry forward the house's technical precision while adapting its practices to climate change, an area Ms. Fiot previously explored through micro-vinification trials and varietal adaptation studies.

She trained alongside Ruinart's late Cellar Master for almost a decade, acting as a key member of the house's tasting committee since 2016.

In her new role, Ms. Fiot will also support the progression of the brand's ESG initiatives, focused on sustainable viticulture ([see story](#)), as Cellar Master. The house announced her appointment in October.

"It is a profound honor to continue shaping the Ruinart style, following in the footsteps of Frdric Panaotis," said Ms. Fiot, in a statement.

"I share Champagne's deep-rooted respect for time, and I'm proud to take my place in the history of a maison guided by a visionary spirit since 1729."