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Dining

Your New Year's Eve Shopping List For Champagne And Sparkling Wine

Cathy Huyghe | Dec 26, 2020

There are five days until New Year's Eve, and some wine lovers among us may still be deciding which sparkling wine to uncork to say Hello to 2021 and good bye, in earnest, to 2020. For most of us, that turn of the calendar year could not happen soon or fast enough.

So let me cut to the chase, and be quick about it.

I'll start with the top three finishers of a blind tasting that my husband and I organized a few weeks ago with two other couples in our COVID-era pod, each of them enthusiastic wine consumers with a special curiosity around Champagne and sparkling wine. We tasted six sparkling wines and, though I was the only one who knew the order, brands and price points of the samples, each of us identified our preferences before long.

The favorite, undoubtedly? Champagne Krug's Grande Cuvée 168th Edition (\$180), with Charles Heidsieck Brut Reserve as the second favorite (\$50).

Tasters recognized that the **2014 Domaine Carneros Extra Brut from Taittinger** (\$35) was the very appealing curve ball in the lineup, most notably because it was from California rather than France and because it was a vintage bottle with some age on it. I can attest that the tasters in the group sought and purchased each of these three wines afterward, for the various reasons you might anticipate: it was unique and unexpected, or it was the right price point, or it was a truly special bottle for an eagerly awaited occasion, or it was some combination of the three.

