

Wine Spectator

A Round of Bubbles to Welcome the New Year

Lists of suggested Champagnes and sparkling wines, plus tips for matching bubbles with food

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There are only a handful of days left before we close out 2009, and indeed the first decade of the new millennium. If you're like us, you'll be waving goodbye with one hand while holding a glass of something bubbly in the other. To that end, we've put together a [list of suggested Champagnes and sparkling wines](#) to help you make the most of your New Year's celebration.

According to *Wine Spectator* contributing editor Sam Gugino, another way to make the most of the festive occasion is to remember that Champagne and sparkling wine can be very good food wines, so don't just save them for the midnight toast. Gugino cites the four attributes that make them good food wines:

- Sparkling wines have less alcohol than most still wines, [which] won't tire you or your palate as quickly. Sparkling wines typically have more acidity than still wines, which keeps the palate refreshed and ready for the next bite of food. The bubbles in sparkling wine also keep the palate refreshed. Sparkling wine is available in a wide range of styles, from light and delicate to rich and powerful, meaning that an equally wide range of foods can be paired with bubbles.

Gugino concludes, "Matching an entire meal with sparkling wines can be a lot of fun. Proceed as you would with still wines: Start with lighter wines, move to heavier stuff, then glide to a finish with something sweet."

However you choose to ring in 2010, *Wine Spectator* wishes you a happy new year!

CHAMPAGNE

CHARLES HEIDSIECK Brut Champagne Réserve NV Score: 92 / \$55

Compelling, from the first aromas of butter, vanilla, toast and coffee to the candied citrus and passion fruit jelly flavors. Harmonious and long, with a refined finish that echoes mineral. Drink now through 2012. 5,000 cases imported.—*B.S.*

PIPER-HEIDSIECK Brut Champagne NV Score: 91 / \$45

A fresh, medium-bodied style, this shows finesse, with notes of apple, peach, ruby grapefruit, vanilla and toast. The refined texture and vibrant structure keep this focused and lingering, with fine length. Drink now through 2012. 50,000 cases imported.—*B.S.*

LOUIS ROEDERER Brut Champagne Premier NV Score: 91 / \$43

Light and lively, featuring apple, toast, ginger and light vanilla flavors. Balanced and on the dry side, with a creamy texture and a lingering butter pastry aftertaste. Drink now through 2011. 42,000 cases imported.—*B.S.*

BEAUMONT DES CRAYÈRES Brut Champagne Grand Prestige NV Score: 90 / \$38

Shows bread dough and toasted grain flavors that verge on malt, yet stay in the lighter register, with an accent of grapefruit. Creamy, nicely balanced and mouthwatering. Drink now. 10,000 cases made.—*B.S.*

DRAPPIER Brut Champagne Carte d'Or NV Score: 90 / \$40

Light and airy in texture, this offers almond, cherry, yeast and citrus flavors matched to a firm structure. Balanced on the dry side, with a crisp finish. Drink now through 2011. 75,000 cases made.—*B.S.*

AYALA Brut Champagne Majeur NV Score: 89 / \$40

On the dry side, with mineral-tinged grapefruit, apple and pastry notes. This isn't crisp, but a chalklike sensation on the finish keeps it firm and focused. Drink now. 41,665 cases made.—*B.S.*

GOSSET Brut Champagne Excellence NV Score: 89 / \$45

Peach and berry flavors get support from a firm structure. A grapefruit accent adds interest and this stays crisp on the finish. Drink now through 2011. 38,000 cases made.—*B.S.*

