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Rare Champagne Unveils Limited-Edition 2012 Vintage in the United States

New release reflects challenging harvest conditions and continues the house’s legacy of exclusivity and craftsmanship in fine champagne.

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Rare
MILLÉSIME 2012
RARE CHAMPAGNE

Rare Champagne has introduced its latest vintage, Rare Millésime 2012, to the United States market. The release marks a significant addition to the house’s portfolio of limited-edition champagnes. Known for producing only exceptional vintages, Rare Champagne continues its tradition of exclusivity with this new offering.

The 2012 growing season in Champagne was marked by difficult weather conditions. Early in the year, frost, hail, and rain threatened the vineyards. However, a warm and sunny summer followed, allowing the grapes to reach an impressive level of ripeness and concentration. The result was a harvest with low yields but high quality, which set the stage for the creation of Rare Millésime 2012.

Émilien Boutillat, Chief Winemaker at Rare Champagne, described the new vintage as having purity and character reminiscent of the acclaimed 2002 release. He noted that the wine displays a combination of spiced aromas and tropical fruit notes, with a distinctive minerality that emerges as it opens in the glass. According to Boutillat, these qualities reflect both the challenges and rewards of the 2012 season.

Rare Millésime 2012 is composed primarily of Chardonnay (70%) sourced from Villers-Marmery and other villages on the Montagne de Reims. The blend is completed with Pinot Noir (30%) from several renowned sites including Verzy, Verzenay, Aÿ, Ambonnay, and Villedommange. The wine spent more than ten years aging on its lees before release, a process that contributes to its complexity and potential for further aging.

The sensory profile of Rare Millésime 2012 is layered and evolving. Initial aromas are subtle but develop into notes of mango, guava, plum, blueberry, and citrus fruits such as bergamot and lemon. Floral hints of lilac are present alongside secondary notes of honey, black tea, vanilla, white pepper, incense, smoke, and dried plants like lime blossom and blonde tobacco.

Rare Champagne recommends pairing this vintage with refined dishes such as coconut-smoked poultry, langoustine tartare, sole meunière with bergamot, or poached rhubarb with Sicilian pistachio. The suggested retail price for Rare Millésime 2012 is $250 per bottle. It is available through select fine wine retailers and online at NobleMerchants.com.

Rare Champagne’s history dates back to 1785 when Florens-Louis Heidsieck first presented his cuvée to Queen Marie Antoinette. The brand’s modern legacy began in 1985 with the release of Rare Millésime 1976 at Château de Versailles. Since then, only fourteen vintages have been released under the Rare label. Each vintage is produced in limited quantities and only in years deemed exceptional by the cellar master.

In recent years, Rare Champagne has also focused on sustainability. In 2022, it became one of the first Champagne houses to achieve B Corp Certification alongside Piper Heidsieck and Charles Heidsieck. This certification recognizes companies that meet high standards of social and environmental performance.

With its latest release, Rare Champagne continues to highlight both tradition and innovation in French winemaking. The arrival of Rare Millésime 2012 offers American collectors and enthusiasts an opportunity to experience a champagne shaped by both adversity and excellence.