

# CRISTAL 2004



## HARVESTING:

A classic, generous year, yielding both quantity and quality. 2004 followed the same climatic trends as 2002 : cool, moderate temperatures throughout the season; and a considerably reduced rainfall (by about 30%) during the growing cycle, which, despite a particularly cold and rainy month of August, was fortunately followed by a dry and sunny September, ripening the grapes off impressively. The Louis Roederer vineyard team worked intensively in this period, and by the 20th September the grapes had attained a “vintage” balance, combining maturity and freshness.

## PRODUCTION:

In 1876, Tsar Alexander II was already a great fan of Louis Roederer’s champagne and he asked Louis Roederer to “go one step further” and produce, for his own personal consumption, a wine unique in quality and bottle. Louis Roederer offered to create an exceptional white crystal bottle to house the best selection from the 7 finest vineyards of his estate, thus creating the first Prestige cuvee of Champagne. This wine is only produced in the “great” years when the ripeness of the Chardonnay and Pinot noir enables a subtle, precise balance.

## STYLE:

Cristal 2004 - incisive, seductive and delicious - has a “slender”, almost “living” freshness. Highly contemporary in its harmony and immediate seductiveness, it nevertheless remains first and foremost a great classic of northern Champagne, combining freshness, energy and an almost chalky mineral quality. The Cristal hallmarks are evident: purity, precision and the unique harmony of flavours associated with the subtle power of our historic vines, located on the finest Champagne Grand Cru terroirs.

## ELABORATION:

The blend is composed of 55% Pinot noir and 45% Chardonnay (20% of which is matured in oak casks with weekly batonnage). No malolactic fermentation occurs. Cristal is produced using harvests from the finest vineyards of Montagne de Reims, the Vallée de la Marne and the Côte des Blancs. Cristal ages an average of 5 years in the cellars and rests 8 months after disgorgement to perfect its maturity. The dosage of between 8 and 10 g/l is customised to complement each vintage.

## TASTING NOTES:

«Brilliant yellow colour displaying light amber nuances, combined with an ultra-fine, persistent, soft effervescence. There’s an intense, highly expressive bouquet on the first nose! The aromatic elegance and precision of Chardonnay is apparent: white fruit, sweet pollen, fine citrus fruit and very pure minerality. After a few minutes, the aromas move on to more confit, lightly grilled hints. The bouquet is rich and sweet, almost generous, remaining precise and impeccably refined. The bite in the mouth is full and creamy, revealing an incredible concentration of juicy fruits: yellow peach, apricot, mango and others. This silky, meaty concentration, which is both dense and soft – and typical of great Pinot noir – is immediately combined with a sophisticated touch of acidity, bringing the wine alive with minerality. The overriding impression is one of a true harmony of flavours, senses and silky textures... Absolute sensuality.»

*Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon*