

Habits de Lumiere â?? the Festival of Lights in Epernay, France

Description

During a three days stay at the Reims in the Champagne region of France, Mukul Manku went on a family visit to the nearby city of Epernay, to attend the famous **Habits de Lumiere** â?? also known as the *Festival of Lights*. In this post, Mukul talks about his experience.

A Train Journey to Epernay

We were in Netherlands for a long stay in winters last year and from there we planned a visit to the Reims, France in such a way that we could also attend the famous Festival of Lights â?? ***Habits de LumiÃ¨re*** â?? held every December in Ã?pernay. As planned on 15 Dec 2025, we we undertook the train journey from Reims and reached Ã?pernay at around 8 pm. A short walk from the railway station, guided smoothly by Google Maps, brought us close to the iconic **Avenue de Champagne**, the venue of the festival. The winter air was cold but the excitement in the town was clearly warm and vibrant.

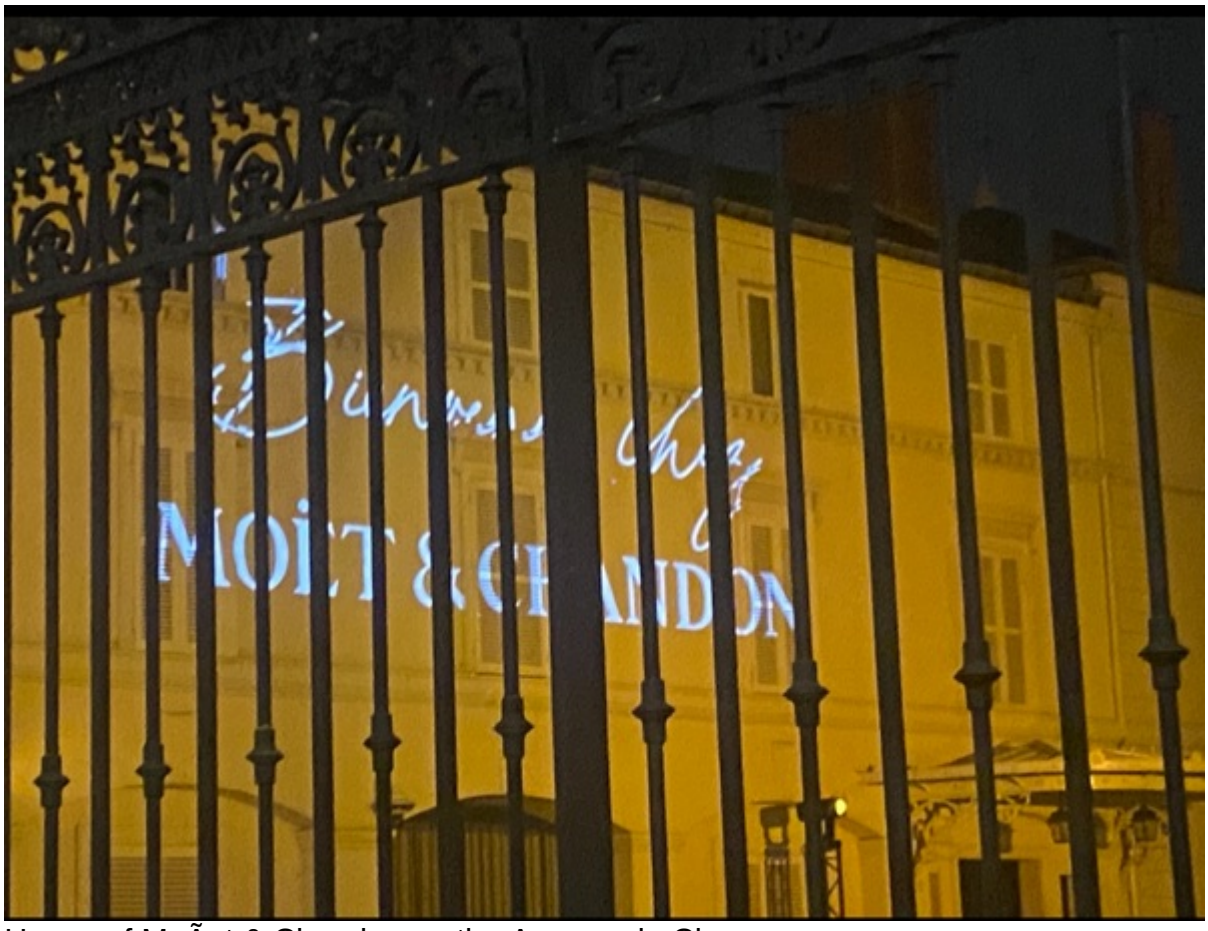
Avenue de Champagne



Avenue de Champagne | Image â?? artdevivre_a_la_champenoise

Located in the heart of Ã?pernay, the Avenue de Champagne is a grand boulevard lined on both sides with renowned maisons, beneath which kilometres of chalk cellars house millions of bottles of champagne ageing in silence.

Now ever since I developed a fascination for the world of champagne I had often wondered about this historic Avenue. I always thought of it to be a neat and wide street lined with the grand buildings of the big champagne houses on either side â?? something as seen in the picture above â?? and itâ??s actually turned out to be much like what I had imagined it to be â?? elegant and grand.



House of MoÃ«t & Chandon on the Avenue de Champagne

Many a times I even fancied entering one of these buildings to taste their champagne â?? something which was dreamlike back then but about to become a reality soon that day.

Habits de Lumiere

Habits de LumiÃ¨re began as an initiative by these Champagne houses to celebrate their heritage, craftsmanship and community spirit at the start of the festive season. Over the years, it has grown into a grand cultural event combining light shows, gastronomy and of course, Champagne.

> Originally known as *Faubourg de la Folie* and later *Avenue du Commerce*, it was renamed in 1925 to reflect what it had already become â?? the historic and beating heart of the champagne trade.

As we approached the entrance to the boulevard, we were greeted by a long queue of people standing before massive gates erected at the start of the Avenue.



Avenue de Champagne was bustling with visitors.

It took us about half hour to cross the security gates and enter the Avenue and as we looked ahead we were amazed to see the sea of humanity gathered on the street. The sheer crowd itself reflected how popular Habits de LumiÃ¨re had become, not just among tourists but also among locals from nearby towns and villages.

An Illuminated Extravaganza

As we started to walk on the street we were welcomed by a dazzling spectacle of lights.



Lights and Lasers

The grand Champagne houses lined on both were decorated beautifully and illuminated in vibrant colours. Light projections on the facades narrated the story and history of the Champagne houses, creating a magical open-air gallery.



As we slowly made our way through the crowded street, we passed several Maison buildings where people were immersed in celebration â?? there was music, dance, decorative flowers, laughter and naturally, plenty of Champagne flowing.



An extravaganza of lights

The air was filled with a carnival-like mood, with live bands marching through the Avenue, playing energetic tunes. Giant illuminated giraffe models towered above the crowd â?? a delightful and somewhat whimsical sight that added to the festive charm.



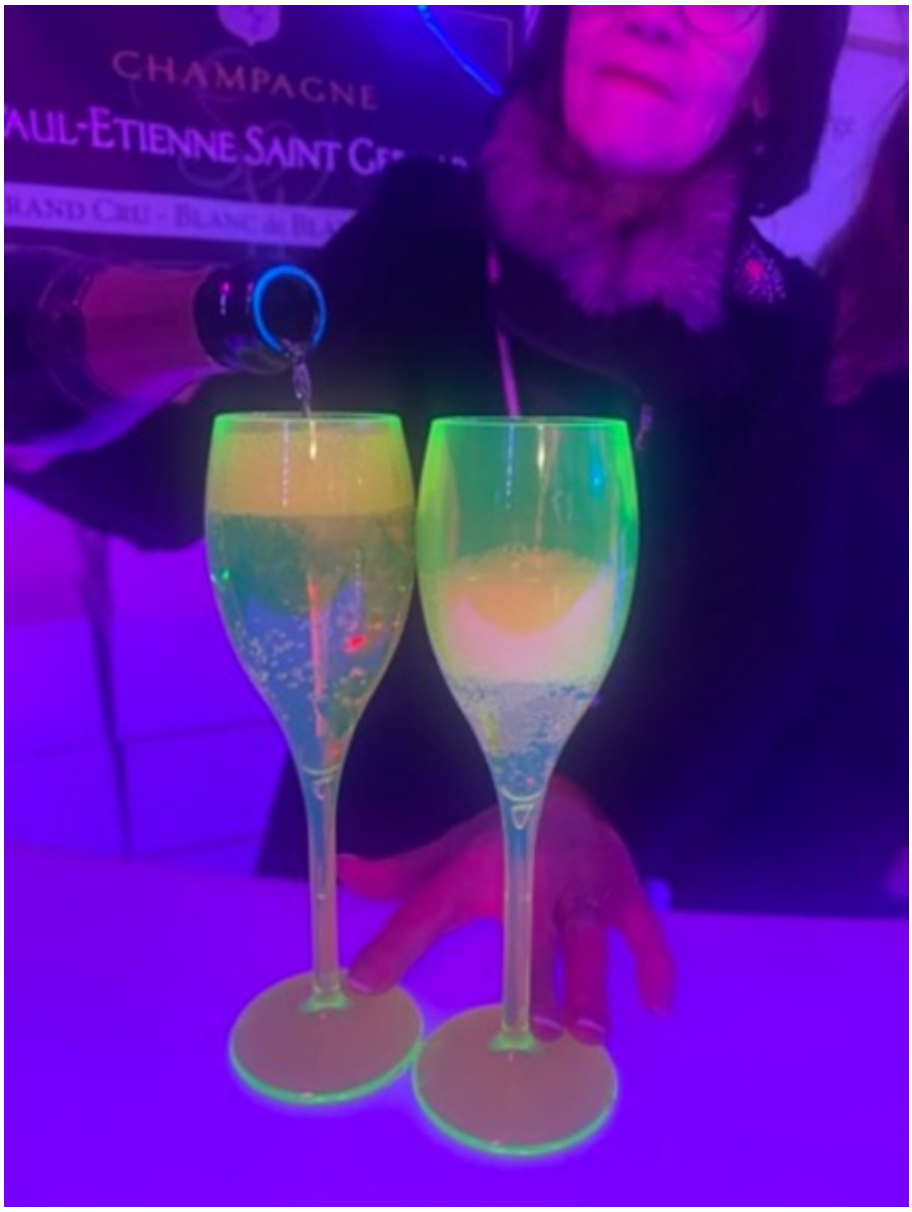
Champagne Tasting

Many Champagne houses had also set up tasting enclosures within their compounds. We stopped at **Champagne Paul-Etienne Saint Germain** to taste their champagnes, which were priced quite reasonably for the festive occasion.



Champagne Paul-Etienne Saint Germain

Their neon-lit courtyard had an atmosphere of complete gaiety. Standing around high tables, we interacted with fellow champagne lovers, exchanged travel stories and even made a few friends.



It truly felt like a community celebration rather than a formal event.

Fireworks Show â?? the Grande Finale

The entire atmosphere that day truly felt like a community celebration rather than a formal event. The most anticipated moment, however, was the fireworks display at the far end of the Avenue. Starting around 8 pm, the sky lit up in a spectacular show of colours and patterns, perfectly synchronised and reflected beautifully against the historic faÃ§ades. It was breathtaking and drew loud cheers from the crowd.



Fireworks display

Although the celebration didnâ??t seem to subside even after the fireworks display but it was getting late and we decided to return back to Reims. The train during the return journey was jam packed, clearly showing how people had showed up in large numbers from surrounding towns, specially for the festival. People kept getting off at different stations along the route and we too de-boarded at Reims, carrying with us the wonderful memories of the amazing festival of lights.

Authorâ??s Note

As I looked back to that day, I feel that *Habits de LumiÃ¨re* is not just a festival of lights, but a celebration of tradition, joy and shared experiences. It was one winter evening in Champagne that we will cherish forever.

I do hope that you loved reading this post. Till next time, itâ??s Cheers from my side !!

Mukul Manku, President Wineglitz India. 15 Feb 2026