



Patrimoine Français: An Evening Crowned by a Third Growth Grand Cru Classé

Description

As President Winegitz India of The Wine Club, Mukul Manku put together an exclusive wine dinner for the members of the club. Held at the PDR of the reimagined and relaunched Le Cirque restaurant in Hotel Leela Palace New Delhi, the event featured exclusive French wines including a Third Growth Grand Cru Classe from Bordeaux. In this post Mukul talks about the wines served in this event.

Wine Selection and Progression

The wine selection was highly appreciated by all guests, combining quality with thoughtful curation. The lineup was intentionally structured as a gradual build-up in intensity, complexity, and expression ensuring that the palate remained engaged without ever feeling fatigued.

Brief details of each wine served are outlined in the paragraphs that follow.

Champagne 1764 Francois Dubois Reverence Brut



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The evening began with the 1764 François Dubois Révérence Brut champagne – a fitting start. The “1764” refers to the birth year of its founder, François Dubois, placing the wine in an important phase of Champagne’s evolution. Around this time, Dom Pérignon had refined blending techniques, Ruinart had become the first established Champagne house, and champagne itself was gaining popularity as a drink of luxury in European royal courts. This cuvée served a subtle nod to those early, defining years of the region.

The François Dubois Champagne house remains in the hands of the same family today, with Nicolas Dubois and his wife as its current custodians. The name “Révérence” on the label is a quiet tribute to the founder and his lasting legacy.



Location of the champagne house near Reims – representative ai image.

The house is based in the historic city of Reims and sources its grapes from vineyards spread across the gentle slopes of Montagne de Reims – one of the premier vine growing areas within the Champagne appellation.

Served at the very start, this effervescent bubbly doubled as both a welcome drink and a social catalyst – easing conversations and setting the tone for the evening ahead.









An Effervescent Start to the evening

The guests enjoyed the champagne's refreshing character alongside the evening's starter snacks

Pascal Jolivet Sancerre Blanc



An exceptional Sauvignon Blanc from Loire

The next wine of the evening was a Sauvignon Blanc from Sancerre in Loire Valley, about 200 kilometres south of Paris – an appellation shaped by mineral-rich soils formed from an ancient prehistoric sea.



Sancerre location in Loire valley. Image © The AD Gazette

Sancerre's character is defined by three key soil types: **Terres Blanches** (limestone and Kimmeridgian clay) lends power and structure, limestone-rich **Caillottes** brings finesse and aromatic lift, while flinty **Silex** soils impart the signature smoky, gunflint notes.

Founder of this wine house, Pascal Jolivet, comes from a family which has been in the wine trade since 1926. He chose to refine his craft in Champagne at Champagne Pommery rather than join his father's business. There, he developed his expertise in blending and precision winemaking skills he later brought back to Sancerre.



The Sauvignon Blanc paired with Scallops

At his Domaine, Pascal follows a minimal-intervention and an organic approach, crafting wines that balance terroir expression with a consistent house style. The result is a fresh, high-acidity wine that paired beautifully with the evening's dishes, from Caesar salad to scallops.

Clarendelle Rouge

With that let me now tell you about the next wine of the evening which was also the first red wine on the table that night. It's called as the **Clarendelle Rouge**, from the family of wines known as **Clarendelle Inspired by Haut Brion**. It forms a part of the portfolio of the umbrella company of Clarence Dillon.



The red (rouge) wine from Clarence Dillon

To better understand these wines, it helps to go back to 1935, when the American company Clarence Dillon, founded by Mr. Clarence Dillon, acquired **Château Haut-Brion** – one of Bordeaux's **First Growths** under the 1855 Classification. Since then, the team at Clarence Dillon has been crafting Haut-Brion wines with remarkable consistency, building decades of experience and refining their winemaking expertise. Today, those very same skills and philosophies are channelled into the wines of the Clarendelle family, lending them both pedigree and precision.

Clarendelle in fact was created by **Prince Robert of Luxembourg** – the current owner of Clarence Dillon, with a clear vision: Bordeaux blends that reflect balance, elegance, and ageing potential, yet remain approachable and affordable for everyday drinking.



Prince Robert of Luxembourg. Image © Domaine Clarence Dillon.

He entrusted his winemaking team — shaped by Château Haut-Brion — believing that their palates, refined on a First Growth, could bring this idea to life. ***And thus, Clarendelle was born, truly inspired by Haut-Brion.***•

The wine we savoured in the third course that evening was the Clarendelle Rouge — crafted from carefully selected vineyard parcels in Saint-Émilion and Haut-Médoc.



Clarendelle Rouge paired with Black Truffle Fettuccine

A beautifully balanced wine, it paired seamlessly with the dishes served, and was thoroughly enjoyed by the guests.

Chateau Kirwan



With that, we arrived at the final wine of the evening â?? **and what a way to conclude**. It was my honour that day, to present the flagship wine of ChÃ¢teau Kirwan, a Grand Cru ClassÃ© estate ranked as a Third Growth in the historic Bordeaux Wine Official Classification of 1855. Kirwan was, in fact, the first chÃ¢teau to be classified in the Third Growth category.



The Kirwan castle at the beginning of the 20th century | Image ??? Wikipedia

Château Kirwan sits on the Cantenac plateau in Margaux, flanked by the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Garonne River to the east. These water bodies moderate the climate, creating stable conditions ideal for vine growth and even ripening.

Shaped over millions of years, the soils here are mainly deep gravel with clay, with gravel layers reaching up to six metres. This forces deep rooting and natural vine stress, enhancing concentration, while gravel aids slow ripening ??? ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon. Clay retains moisture, benefiting Merlot's softness, while Cabernet Franc adds lift and a touch of Carmenère brings subtle spice to the wine. There's even some Petit Verdot in the blender which adds to the deeper colour of the wine.

Interestingly, Thomas Jefferson visited in 1787 and ranked Château Kirwan among Bordeaux's finest.



