



KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

## CHAMPAGNE PAUL BARA

Country: France

Region: Champagne

Appellation(s): Champagne Grand Cru

Producer: The Bara Family & Christian

Forget

Founded: 1860

Annual Production: 7,500 cases

Farming: Lutte Raisonnée (since 2000)

Website: [www.champagnepaulbara.com](http://www.champagnepaulbara.com)



The Montagne de Reims boasts some of the best Pinot Noir in the region, and Bouzy is its capital. The key to Bouzy's inherent greatness lies in its deep, chalky subsoil which imparts intense expression of fruit and great mineral complexity in its *grand cru* wines. The village of Bouzy and Champagne Paul Bara are practically synonymous. As the published village historian, Paul is indelibly linked to the lore of his hometown. Many argue that he is their most renowned producer, being one of the rare *récoltants-manipulants* in a region inundated with the mass-produced wines of the large, corporate champagne houses. These *récoltants-manipulants*, or R.M.s as they are known, are of the few that still grow their own grapes *and* make their own wines. Champagne Paul Bara is the quintessential example, where everything is done with a personalized touch.

Over the years, gradual improvements have been made to the estate: the surface area of the vineyards was expanded to eleven hectares (only 26 acres!), the winery and press modernized, and the cellar extended – and what an impressive cellar! It is carved entirely out of pure chalk and reaches a depth of over thirty feet below ground. When Paul returned home at the end of World War II, he found these same cellars raided, pillaged of nearly all inventory, and irreverently trashed by the German occupying forces. Of the few bottles that were salvaged, one can still experience the longevity and timeless quality of the Bara's classic style. When Paul retired, he passed the direction of the estate over to his eldest daughter, Chantale, who has kept their family traditions and their house style very much alive. The Baras make their wines by hand, with low-yielding vines and good maturity is ensured by prolonged bottle aging. Andrew Jefford, author of *The New France*, calls them, "...essential references for anyone who wants to enjoy and understand the ripe, dry richness of Bouzy..."



CHAMPAGNE PAUL BARA (continued)

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
<b>Bouzy Brut Réserve Grand Cru</b>	80% Pinot Noir 20% Chardonnay	35 years average	Clay, Limestone	11 ha total
<b>Bouzy Brut Rosé Grand Cru</b>	80% Pinot Noir (12% Bouzy Rouge), 20% Chardonnay	35 years average	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Bouzy Brut Grand Cru Millésimé</b>	90% Pinot Noir 10% Chardonnay	35 years average	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Bouzy Brut “Comtesse Marie de France” Grand Cru Millésimé</b>	Pinot Noir	40 to 50 years	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Spécial Club Brut Grand Cru Millésimé</b>	70% Pinot Noir 30% Chardonnay	35 years average	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Spécial Club Brut Rosé Grand Cru Millésimé</b>	70% Pinot Noir (5% Bouzy Rouge), 30% Chardonnay	35 years average	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Bouzy Rouge Coteaux Champenois Grand Cru</b>	Pinot Noir	30 + years	Clay, Limestone	
<b>Bouzy Brut “L’Annociade de Paul Bara” Blanc de Noirs Grand Cru Millésimé</b>	Pinot Noir	Average 50 years	Clay, Limestone	

\* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

- Domaine has 8.5 ha of Pinot Noir, 1.5 ha of Chardonnay
- Only the first pressing of the grapes is used for the wine
- After alcoholic fermentation, the cold cellar temperatures force the wines into dormancy over the winter months
- All grapes undergo fermentation in temperature-controlled, stainless steel *cuvées*
- White wine and rosé does not undergo malolactic fermentation
- Punch-downs and pump-overs occur daily for red wines
- Red wine undergoes a natural malolactic fermentation
- Bouzy Rosé is a blend of direct press, and Bouzy Rouge
- NV Bouzy Brut and Rosé age in bottle for 3 years before release, vintage cuvées age 6 to 12 years



## CHAMPAGNE PAUL BARA (continued)

### **Bouzy Brut Réserve Grand Cru:**

- Aged 6 years on lees
- Current disgorgement: January 2018
- Vintages in the current disgorgement: 2011
- Dosage 7 g/L

### **Bouzy Brut Grand Rosé Grand Cru:**

- Made by direct press
- Aged 4 years on lees
- Current disgorgement: December 2018
- Vintages in the current disgorgement: 2014 (base) and 3-4 older vintages that compose the “vin de réserve”
- Dosage 8 g/L

### **Bouzy Brut Grand Cru Millésimé:**

- Ages in bottle for 8 years before release
- Current disgorgement: March 2019 (2012 vintage), October 2018 (2010 vintage), February 2018 (2009 vintage)
- Dosage 8 g/L

### **Spécial Club Brut Grand Cru Millésimé:**

- Ages in bottle for 5 years before release
- Current disgorgement: December 2018 (2009 vintage)
- Dosage 7 g/L

### **Spécial Club Brut Rosé Grand Cru Millésimé:**

- Made by direct press
- Ages in bottle for 9 years before release
- Current disgorgement: January 2018 (2013 vintage)
- Dosage 7 g/L



## CHAMPAGNE PAUL BARA (continued)

### Bouzy Brut Grand Cru “Comtesse Marie de France”:

- Ages in bottle for 9 years before release
- Current disgorgement: March 2017 (2006 Vintage)
- Dosage 8 g/L
- The brand, "Comtesse Marie de France," was created by Paul Bara on behalf of a French restaurateur. Today, the restaurant is closed, but the brand is technically still theirs. Because of this, Champagne Paul Bara is required to add MA “Marque d'Acheteur” to their label as opposed to RM (Récoltant Manipulant). In this case, MA is not in conflict with RM as this cuvée is made with estate fruit and by Champagne Paul Bara. For more information on the types of Champagne houses, click [here](#).

### Bouzy Brut “L’Annonciade de Paul Bara” Blanc de Noirs Grand Cru Millésimé:

- Ages in barrel for 6 months and in bottle for 10 years before release
- Current disgorgement: November 2016 (2005 Vintage)
- Dosage 5 grams/liter
- The Annonciade bottling is an *hommage* to an ancestor of the Bara family. In 1833, Annonciade, daughter of a winemaker from Bouzy, married Auguste François Bara, a young cooper from a neighboring village. Jules Bara, their son, constructed the first cellar at Champagne Paul Bara. This cuvée symbolizes the perfect marriage between *vigneronne* and cooper.

## MISCELLANEA

*Author of a “History of Bouzy,” Paul Bara is the memory and the great specialist of the cru, the fruit of which he knows how to preserve so marvelously without adding weight to the palate. That his eldest daughter is succeeding him does not at all change the house style. In particular, their Brut Réserve and the Cuvée Club, two wines of rare aromatic distinction, can be compared to the best, most prestigious cuvées from negociants at a half or a third of their price.*

The Best Wines of France 2006 (published by La Revue du Vin de France)

*Bara epitomizes all that is wonderful about old world, hand-crafted Champagne. Their vineyards are all rated 100% Grand Cru; the bottles are all processed one at a time, using techniques developed over 100 years ago; the wines are seamless, at once delicate, and at the same time powerful. There's simply nothing to compare them to.*

Bruce Neyers, KLWM