

Wine Spectator

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René Geoffroy | *The Noirist*

For three generations, according to winemaker and owner Jean-Baptiste Geoffroy, 43, his house has systematically avoided malolactic fermentation unless it occurs naturally. In most of Champagne, this bacterial process is relied upon to convert highly tart malic acid into smoother lactic acid, but most of Geoffroy's parcels are in Cumières, Pinot Noir country in the geographical heart of Champagne, where the grape acidity is less bracing than it is elsewhere.

"If nature gives you nice, good acidity, it's very essential to preserve this," he says. Also unusual, although increasingly à la mode, is Geoffroy's practice of omitting or severely limiting *dosage*. Almost all his bubbly is extra brut, which means 6 grams of residual sugar or less per liter in the final wine. The resulting wines are exceptionally brisk.

Rosé Champagne represents a fairly low volume of the region's wine output, at about 8.5 percent of total production, but at Geoffroy, it's closer to 20 percent. He creates his rosés using the *saignée* method (most other houses blend red wine with white). And beginning with the 2008 vintage, he also began macerating Pinot Noir and Chardonnay together and bleeding *that* off. "Nobody had tried this before me," says Geoffroy.

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| 92 | Brut Rosé Champagne Saignée | NV |
| 91 | Extra Brut Champagne | 2002 |
| 90 | Brut Champagne Expression | NV |
| 90 | Extra Brut Rosé Champagne Blanc de Rose de Saignée | NV |