

Celebrating CHAMPAGNE

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CIVC presented The Champagne Week 2010 in Mumbai and New Delhi, taht was held on October 12. The activities were presented by Daniel Lorson, a native Champenois, and Director of Communications at the Comite Champagne (CIVC) along with him was Rajiv Singhal, the Ambassador of Champagne to India.

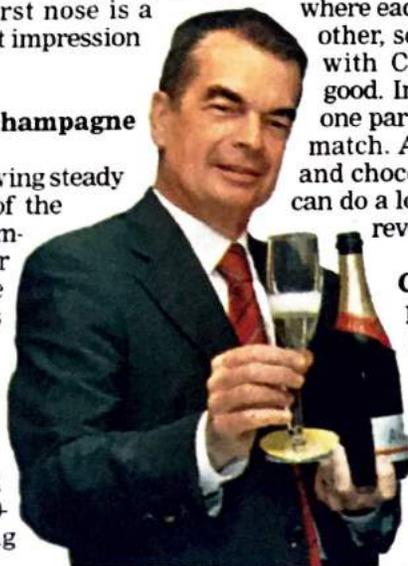
What is Champagne week all about?
Comite Champagne (CIVC) is the nodal body in Champagne which defines policies, controls quality and protects and promotes the Champagne appellation. The Champagne Week 2010 held in Mumbai and Delhi was an opportunity for the CIVC and the Champenois to listen and adapt - to understand better the specific needs of the market and propose those Champagne from the widely diverse range that match best the desired characteristics.

How different is champagne tasting from wine tasting?

The fundamental senses of sight smell and taste remain the same. A Champagne taster is expecting to identify the grape varietal, blend, growths, reserves, and vintages which interact and overlap. The bubbles of Champagne present a challenge for tasting. They enhance the flavours and maintain freshness, but the true character of the Champagne is revealed to the taster once (s)he is able to perceive beyond the bubbles. This perception is only possible with experience, which can not be replaced by any gift of god. The first nose is a very important first impression for the wine.

How popular is champagne in India?

India has been showing steady progress in terms of the growth of the Champagne market over the last four to five years. The trends are showing more people drinking Champagne and this visibility is clear in various restaurants and bars. The young 30-year-olds enjoying



with Champagne is a revelation. Our mission is to facilitate dissemination of information in this strategic market, and we are building towards the maturity of this market in the next few years.

What food goes well with champagne?

As soon as it is recognised that Champagne is a great wine from a great terroir produced by great wine makers there is no reason why Champagne should not be considered a good match with food, albeit with some rules. Right pairing is about harmony. Like a couple, pairing Champagne and food presents the challenge where each part helps to promote the other, so when a dish tastes better with Champagne the pairing is good. In pairing, any domination of one part will completely annul the match. An example is Champagne and chocolate — while Champagne can do a lot of good for chocolate the reverse is not true.

Champagne hugely depends upon the climate of a region, so which country or region has the best champagne?

Champagne only comes from La Champagne in France. No other wine can be called Champagne if it is not made in this special-

ly designated region. Champagne is a registered and recognised geographical indication, and the natural elements and the terrier of the region make this agricultural product unique.

What are the determine factors to identify a good champagne?

Good champagne is the one you like after proper initiation. To identify, look for the appellation Champagne in big letters, which guarantees origin and quality. The brand (house which elaborated the Champagne) might guide you in your choice. The style, like a Brut sans annee (with no year mentioned) or vintage is another factor. Vintage which has grapes only from one single year of harvest is usually better quality because of a legally mandated longer ageing in the cellars. The prestige cuvees are the top of the range of the house, and are usually made with the best selection of growths, classification and vintages.

Which is your favourite champagne?

The one I drink in the company of good friends, and one which gives me pleasure. Any champagne must be savoured after a proper initiation. There are too many styles that may appeal to your taste, and knowledge plays a very important role. While anyone's advice is welcome, it's your own palate and judgement that counts.