

Champagne Lilbert-Fils Cramant



The Wines:

- *Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs NV*: This comes from all three communes where Lilbert farms vines. Typically, it is made with three consecutive vintages and is aged on its lees for a minimum of three years beginning in April following the harvest. It's also made entirely from the first pressing; Bertrand's second press juice for all three cuvées is sold to Moët.

With the warmer years, Bertrand began to lower his dosages from the usual 6-7 grams to less than 5 grams, beginning with the NV based on 2014. The NV based on 2015 received 4 grams; the NV based on 2016 received 3 grams. The style isn't changing so much as the weather is warming. Annual production is 1,650 12-pk cases annually plus 2,000 half bottles.

- *Perle NV*: This, the house's rarest and most sought-after wine, also comes from all three communes, but is sourced from old Chardonnay vines. Its dosage is now in the 3-4 grams per liter range, and it is bottled with a lower pressure than the non-vintage classic— 4 bars of pressure rather than the normal 6— making it particularly transparent, sleek, and mineral. This ages on its lees for a minimum of four years. 165-250 12-pk cases annually.
- *Vintage Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs*: 100% Chardonnay. Since 1995 this has been made entirely from grapes raised in the hamlet of Cramant. The primary source is a parcel on the lower northeast side of the village named Les Buissons, where the Lilbert vines--all nine rows of them--were planted in 1936. The second source is a higher east-facing parcel in Les Moyens on the other side of Cramant, specifically the northwest side and beginning at the village's edge. Les Moyens straddles a ridge, and half faces east, half west, both of which are oddities on this side of Cramant where most vines face either north or south across the road that crosses the Cramant pass and dips down into a valley en route to Cuis. Les Buissons gives powerfully rich fruit that is lifted nicely by the taut fruit of Les Moyens, which makes up around a quarter of the blend.

Like the Perle, this is now bottled with a dosage of 3-4 g/l. The wine is made only in good years, and, also like the Perle, production averages 165-250 12-pk cases annually plus 1,000 bottles of magnums.