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WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
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HIS HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES
WINE MERCHANTS
CORNEY & BARROW LIMITED
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INDEPENDENT WINE MERCHANTS - 1780

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CHAMPAGNE SALON

2002 VINTAGE

EXCLUSIVE TO CORNEY & BARROW IN THE UK

GRACE & POWER

As the first Salon vintage of the new millennium, it is fitting that Salon 2002 should make so assured an entrance, displaying with aplomb the classic hallmarks of Salon's DNA: power, grace, and precision.





The man behind the legend, Eugene-Aimé Salon, a native of the Champagne region, made his fortune in the early 1900s in business in Paris. A regular on the society circuit, Aimé Salon was not only a high achiever but a *bon vivant* and aesthete, who became obsessed by the notion of the perfect champagne. Frustrated in what amounted to an almost religious pursuit of the holy *coupe*, Aimé resolved to create it himself. So he sought advice from his brother-in-law, a cellar master in Champagne, then set to work.

First of all, the objective: Aimé's perfect champagne would ally power and restraint, richness yet refinement. He was convinced that the key lay in the chardonnay grape. He scoured the Côte des Blancs for vineyards and decided upon the *Grand Cru* village of Le Mesnil-sur-Oger, prized for the elegance of its wines. Step by painstaking step, he identified a number of specific vineyard parcels known to yield grapes with an exceptionally fine balance of fruit flavour, sugar and acidity. Over time, Aimé narrowed the selection process further, deeming only certain vintages worthy of Salon. As demanding in the *chai* as in the vineyard, Aimé Salon would select the lightest, finest juice from the first pressing, from which only the purest wines would make his final blend – the famous cuvée 'S' – before the lengthy *prise de mousse* in his cellars in Le Mesnil. He eschewed the 'helping hand' of malolactic fermentation – a standard winemaking technique for softening chardonnay's pronounced acid profile – in favour of time. Experiment and observation had revealed a clear premise: chardonnay's fine bone structure needs subtle curve for allure, and curve develops only with time; there would be no shortcuts to perfection.

A century on, Salon is still produced according to Aimé Salon's exacting methods. The man may have been considered an eccentric during his time, but he pioneered single-handedly the champagne style we know now as *blanc de blancs*. A single wine, a single vintage, a single grape, and time: Salon is the legacy of a remarkable man, driven by a singular vision.

The traditions of this exceptional champagne continue to be upheld under the aegis of the charismatic and energetic Didier Depond, President of Champagne Salon and its sister house Champagne Delamotte for some years. This means that Salon continues to be made only in special vintages and in minuscule quantities, to be released only after a decade's ageing.

VINTAGE NOTES

“Salon 2002... c’est l’âme de Champagne Salon.”

“Salon 2002... is the very soul of Champagne Salon.”

DIDIER DEPOND
President, Champagne Salon

2002 was an unusual vintage, marked by sets of alternating weather conditions that have left, as always, their unique print on the final wine. The year began with a useful spell of dry cold, allowing the vines to rest. February was a miserable month, as sodden *vignerons* struggled through squalls to complete pruning. Mild, calm conditions throughout March saw the little chardonnay buds swell, then an unusually dry, warm and sunny April advanced the growth cycle. While May brought a few refreshing showers, June arrived to a fanfare of resplendent sunshine and warmth, the vines flowering like clockwork in picture-perfect conditions. As is often the case however, July and particularly August proved trying, as if Mother Nature, questioning her earlier indulgence, had decided to show who is boss. The weather swung as if on a whim, from sunshine to storms, warmth to cold – conditions that lasted into early September, when the madness stopped and the clouds melted into flawless blue skies. An unusual combination of warm, sunny days and plunging night-time temperatures proved significant in the run-up to harvest, helping ripen the fruit gently while simultaneously preserving freshness. The grapes were picked in mid-September, having attained an outstanding balance of richness, power and acidity.



TASTING NOTES

“...captivating and enigmatic: gossamer-fine, the wine’s tiny bubbles seem to skim weightlessly across the palate...”

At first tasting in January 2014, and only recently disgorged after years on the lees, Salon 2002 seemed the very essence of Salon, displaying the wine’s familiar contrasts of tone, temperature and tension. Its aromas span the spectrum from delicate white spring flowers to sensual jasmine and exotic hot ginger. These evocative flavours seem to warm and brighten on the palate: saturated with creamy orange flowers, candied citrus, fresh brioche, and laced with a tonic saline minerality, the mouth is a sensational riot. But it is perhaps in texture and weight, that this Salon proves most captivating and enigmatic: gossamer-fine, the wine’s tiny bubbles seem to skim weightlessly across the palate, that has no apparent edge or end. Simultaneously deep, rich and ethereal, Salon 2002 walks the high wire of power with customary poise.

Corney & Barrow Score 19 to 19.5



REBECCA PALMER

March 2014

A very limited number of magnums will be available in a few months’ time – please speak to your sales representative for more details.

Stock will be available for delivery from mid-May 2014.

RECOMMENDED DRINKING DATES

Vintage	Drink date
1982	Now to 2030
1983	Now to 2030 <i>At absolute peak now – extraordinary wine! (Magnums will drink to 2020+)</i>
1985	Now to 2030 (magnum to 2040)
1988	Now to 2030 (magnum to 2040)
1990	Now to 2040 (magnum to 2040)
1995	Now to 2050 (magnum to 2060)
1996	Now to 2050+ (magnum to 2060+)
1997	Now to 2040 (magnum to 2050)
1999	Now to 2050+ (magnum to 2060+)
2002	Now to 2060+ (magnum to 2070+)

TO ORDER

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A close-up photograph of a metallic surface, likely a car's body panel, featuring a prominent oval-shaped logo. The logo is embossed and contains the word "SALONI" in a stylized, uppercase font. The surface is highly reflective, showing bright highlights and deep shadows that emphasize its metallic texture. The background is dark, making the metallic area stand out.

SALONI

