



Champagne Brands 2017: How we did it

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Holly Motion details the process behind the results of this year's World's Most Admired Champagne Brands

Bollinger is once again the World's Most Admired Champagne Brand in the hearts and minds of our esteemed Academy. After losing its crown to Krug last year, James Bond's favourite champagne has climbed an impressive three places to claw it back. Last year's winner has slipped one place and is joined by Louis Roederer, Pol Roger and Billecart-Salmon to make up the top five most admired sparklers.

The formula is largely unchanged in this poll's fourth year. We assembled a voting panel drawn from a wide range of leading retailers, marketers, educators and top wine journalists and asked them to name their top five champagne brands from a list of 50 houses and cooperative producers.

Rather than providing an exhaustive list of rules and regulations we just ask that they consider the following:

- The quality and consistency of the champagne brand, with particular reference to its main non-vintage cuvée
- Whether that quality and consistency had been maintained or improved in recent years
- How well the champagne is marketed and packaged
- Whether the brand offers good value at its price level
- How highly the brand's overall image is rated.

The 74-strong Academy did just that and the top 30 includes some interesting results. As is always the case, some big names have fallen short of the Academy's expectations. Champagne guru Giles Fallowfield will pontificate on why this might be, but here's a snapshot of the results.

Only 17 brands have featured in every list since its conception. This year, in total, 13 brands dropped and 13 climbed up the charts. Armand de Brignac is the biggest casualty, falling 14 places. Henriot can boast the biggest jump as it shot up from 23rd to 13th this year. Delamotte and Alfred Gratien re-enter and Nicolas Feuillatte makes its debut in the list.

Bollinger may be the top pick this year but all eyes will be on what difference, if any, the 2016 harvest (see page 30) will have on the most admired champagne brands.