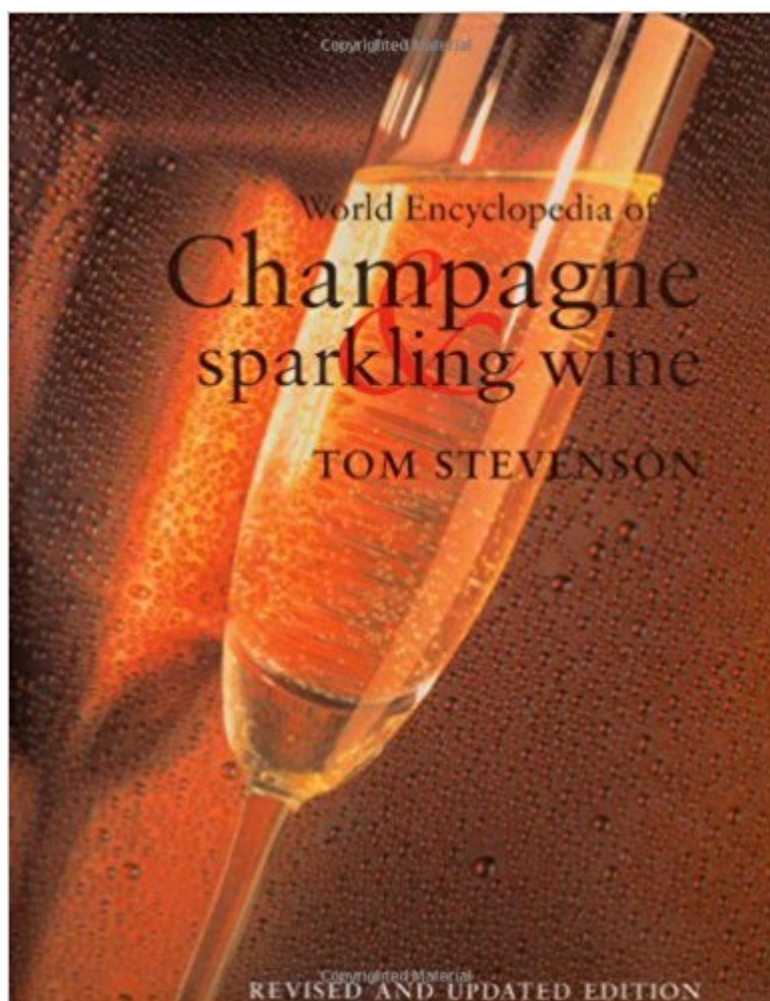


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World Encyclopedia Of Champagne And Sparkling Wine, Revised And Updated Edition



Synopsis

The first in-depth guide to sparkling wines of the world from champagne to California, Italy to Australia and beyond. A facinating first section describes the history of sparkling wine and proves beyond any doubt that it was the English rather than the French who first produced a fizzy wine. The main body of the encyclopedia is devoted to profiles of the world's sparkling wine produces accompanied by tasting notes, recommendations for drinking and good value for young money. Another section lists the author's personal selection of sparkling wines to drink for the Millennium. Beautifully illustrated and designed with over 600 full color photographs and illustrations, this is the ultimate book for those who love the good things in life and who want to discover the best was to welcome in the new year. Tom Stevenson is the world's leading authority on Champagne. He is the author of 14 books and winner of 21 literary awards, including 13 for his works on Champagne. He has been voted Wine Writer of the Year three times!

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Customer Reviews

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World Encyclopedia of Champagne and Sparkling Wine, Revised and Updated Edition

Â I have long regarded the writings of Tom Stevenson on Champagne as excellent but this publication takes an even bigger look at the wine style. I am most impressed with the world coverage of sparkling wine styles and Tom has cast an experienced palate without favour across a great range of wines. I am very happy to see him devote space to some aspects of Champagne marketing and trademark, the classical example as described under the heading of Stefano Lubiana on page 308.

In 1986 Tom Stevenson released his "Champagne" and established himself as a premier expert in bubbly wines. In this volume, he expands his range beyond the French region and considers other fizzy grape juice, both in France, and worldwide. This is a welcome release by an author who is thoughtful and makes positive contributions to wine scholarship, criticism, and appreciation. Critics of Stevenson often take issue with minor errors and typos in his trade paperback books (pocket buying guides). My observation is Stevenson's bookshelf reference works have all the careful editing you would expect for a premium product. I still find myself frequently reading his original tasting notes and information in his now 20 year old "Champagne." Stevenson's critics often take issue with his palate, selections, and emphasis. My own view is these critics are unfair. A serious wine drinker, who reads and thinks about wine, should keep first and foremost in mind their own preferences, while also developing ability to distinguish grapes and terroir. These objective skills, then coupled with self knowledge, let one understand and appreciate another wine critic's points of emphasis and preference. Almost anyone understands that Robert Parker's early views were heavily emphasized by a preference for sweet fruit, low acid, and his abiding love of stickies. Only after years have Parker's criticisms of dryer and more tannic wines become more balanced. Stevenson deserves similar sympathy and respect. A fundamental question then is: is this book worth it? For those who both like to drink, read, and think about wine, the answer is an unreserved yes. In addition, even for the casual consumer this work can help you save money on purchases. But the primary audience is wine geeks who like to try everything and think about it. Stevenson's notes are now more global,

and hence slightly less detailed than his earlier works. Make no mistake, Stevenson's preferences are not mine, however I often find myself turning to him for advice on selections when I need to entertain and have competing goals of budget and food matching. Worth every penny.

He has a thoroughly enjoyable writing style (especially the puns) with superb information. I use the book very frequently when purchasing. These errors are minor but the sheer quantity of them seems inexcusable, especially in an encyclopedia and in an edition that has been "fully revised and updated".*The book does not explain the difference between "organic" and "bio-diversity" and the glossary makes them seem to be the same.*He uses the term "stone-fruit" to describe flavours and/or aromas but does not break this down. Stone fruit can include cherries, chokecherries, peaches, apricots, plums, dates, nectarines, etc. (each being prevalent in some wines) - what does he mean?*He uses the term "foursquare" frequently in describing a wine but provides no definition. I realize it is probably a British phrase but the book is sold world-wide.*He alludes to bottle shape possibly having some influence on the development of a wine's character but does not develop this thought.*There is superb, poor and inconsistent punctuation throughout the book. There are incorrect verb tenses. There are hundreds of places where commas would clarify meaning and ease the reader's experience. There are many double spaces between words within a sentence. Any word processing program should have caught this, and most of the spelling and grammar ones.*In a few instances, he disparages plastic corks. Yet, in other instances, he laments that bad corks ruined some wonderful Champagnes he was sampling. Readers would benefit from a more detailed explanation.*Sometimes he harshly criticizes a label design but he doesn't reproduce it to illustrate his point. Since labels are important to his rating system, this would be instructive. I realize space is at a premium, but it would be more beneficial than seeing another photo of another vineyard.*It would help a great deal if he noted the date he tasted a wine. Readers could extrapolate from the copyright to the products they have available.

This is a great book for anyone - from those who have the resources to buy some of the top names and remarkable vintages noted in this book to those simply in love with this beverage. I fall, sadly, under the latter category with the fervent hope that someday I will fall under both. I derived hours of enjoyment from flipping through the different producers, although I found that after an hour I had a tremendous taste for anything Krug. Odd, that. One of the "features" of this book that I appreciate the most is the "Why is [Krug/Salon/etc] so Special?" Books that extract essential information from the text and display them in sidebars usually help the reader gain a better understanding of the

topic. It certainly does so in this case.

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