



# D IS FOR DELICIOUS!

...but also for Different. Champagne Devaux has a richly deserved reputation for its magnificent Champagnes – and also for taking the alternative path to glory

**M**edical research has proved that married people generally live longer than their unmarried counterparts. But perhaps not in Champagne. At least, not for the male half of the equation...

The Champagne industry is littered with stories of women prematurely widowed who took charge of businesses and built them up into names recognised the world over.

And never was this more true than at Champagne Devaux. From shortly after its foundation in 1846 until well into the 20th century, it was run by a succession of determined women who had all lost their husbands far earlier than expected.

Claude-Joséphine, Augusta-Maria and Marguerite Marie-Louise might have experienced less than ideal circumstances domestically, but they did a great job professionally. By the 1900s the house was already well-enough thought of globally to be exporting 75% of its production.

It's quite an achievement – although Devaux stands out from the crowd in several ways. Firstly, it isn't based on the well-known slopes around Reims and Epernay, but in the Côte des Bar, an area often treated as a bit of an afterthought by the wine textbooks, which is both odd and unfair.

Not only are its rolling hills – bounded by the Aube and the Seine

rivers to north and south respectively – rather beautiful, but this area is also responsible for a quarter of the Champagne region's total production. It deserves to be better known.

It probably helps that the Aube, 150km south of Epernay, is significantly warmer. This makes its vineyards excellent for growing red grapes, particularly Pinot Noir, which makes up over 85% of all the vines.

As such, it's no great surprise that Pinot Noir should be the backbone variety for Devaux – the one that they go out of their way to make the most of. All of the growers who are members of Devaux must sign up to a quality charter that goes well beyond the requirements stipulated by the Champagne authorities. The 'D Selection' is a strict set of commitments aimed at safeguarding careful husbandry of the land

(sustainability) and extreme attention to detail. Since more than 100 growers have signed up to it down the years, you could say that Devaux is doing its bit to improve viticulture in its entire region.

But Devaux's differentness doesn't stop there. In the winery, the iconic Collection D non-vintage cuvées spend time ageing in oak before the second fermentation in bottle that will give them their fizz. The wines then spend an inordinately long time ageing in bottle in the cellar. The Cuvée D highlighted here spends a minimum of five years in the cool of the cellar before it is released.

Add in the oak influence and you end up with a wine that is rich, flavourful and complex – brilliant not just as an aperitif, but also as a superb food wine to accompany the likes of seafood and truffles.



## WHAT IT TASTES LIKE

It has a character of white blossom, soft spices, toasted brioche and vanilla, backed up with mandarin and orange zest. Fresh, but intense.

## WHERE TO GET IT

**High Street:** £42 @ Hedonism Wines, Planet of the Grapes

**Restaurants:** Carousel, Ormer Mayfair at Flemings Hotel, Texture



**PAIR IT WITH...**  
Scallops with truffles