

Sommeliers' recommendations  
Henri Chapon



Sommelier Henri Chapon, has been a sommelier at numerous prestigious restaurants, such as Loews in Monte Carlo and Le Manoir aux Quat'saisons near Oxford, as 2 Michelin stars and is part of the Hotel du Vin Group in Great Britain. Henri Chapon has won numerous prestigious awards: The Ruinart Trophy for the Best Young Sommelier of Monaco in 1990, the Ruinart Trophy for Best Sommelier of Great Britain in 1995, the Grand Prix Sopexa for Best Sommelier of Great Britain and French Wine and Spirits in 2002, 3rd place in the Ruinart Trophy for Best Sommelier of Europe in 2002. And recently, in 2007 he was presented with the Sommelier Award for "outstanding contribution to the profession".

*"I have chosen here to give you some recommendations for wine that I like to drink whenever I have the pleasure of one (or two!!!) dozen oysters from Parcs Saint Keber, and I hope they are to your taste !*

*Of course, you have to obey certain rules. First of all, I recommend a white wine. A dry wine is preferable, maybe even very dry. Please note that a dry wine can also be fruity. All too often the fruitiness of an aromatic white wine is mistaken for sweetness. So here are my suggestions, in no particular order. You should always remember that a higher priced wine from a small denomination is often a quality wine, whereas a less expensive wine from a large denomination is often a mediocre wine. If the price is the same, then I would recommend choosing the one from the small denomination...*

*Muscadet is an obvious choice to have with oysters. However, the richness and unctuousness of the Saint Kerber oysters, especially the Spéciale Saint Kerber also go well with more aromatic wines. If you want to stay with the Muscadet, then choose a vintage wine, but not one that has been aged in oak. »*

### **Sauvignon grape variety:**

> Touraine : choose preferably an independent winegrower who knows how to keep the grape's minerals intact while allowing it to release all its flavours and roundness.

> Sancerre : you need a fruity wine or a young wine or a wine from one of the big vineyards such as Les Monts Damnés.

> Pouilly-Fumé : The opposite of Sancerre, choose a Pouilly-Fumé of noble origin and of some age, one that is beginning to express its smoky, mineral flavours.

> Bordeaux : choose a wine that preferably has not been aged too long ,in oak. Often, Sauvignon is made up of Sémillon which can produce wines ,that are a bit too wrapped up and that are therefore not at their best with the taste of iodine from the oysters.

> Nouvelle-Zélande : choose a Marlborough wine from a good region to avoid the often deciduous side of some Sauvignons from this country. However, if you succeed in procuring a wine that is richer and more unctuous, then these wines could appeal to you.

### **Riesling :**

> Alsace : In the range of wines produced in Alsace, oysters sit better with a dry, mineral wine. The very large vineyards produce such wines. Please note however that "mineral" does not mean very dry or acid. Do not be afraid to let yourself be tempted by a "Grand Cru" but avoid wines that are refined or have too much additional sugar. Mineral content and freshness are the key words.

> Germany : Preferably dry wines (trocken) from Rheingau or from Palatinat (Pflaz). As with the Alsace, do not hesitate to pick a wine that comes from the best vineyards. In Germany these are called « Einzellage ». Don't look on the label as you will not find this word on there. Ask the wine seller you buy the wine from about its origins.

> Austria : Some very good Rieslings are produced on the slopes of the Danube, in the Wachau region. From there pick a dry wine (trocken) and try to find a Smaragd or a Federspiel. These labels will give you a powerful wine that is, most of the time, dry, and which goes well with oysters.

> Australie : Australia : The best Rieslings come from Clare Valley. Here, as with other regions, make sure the wine is dry! Wines from this region have a tendency to have a fruity exuberance. These wines therefore make a good and pleasant alternative.

### **Chardonnay :**

The Chardonnay grape produces wines that are rich and powerful. It is therefore preferable to pick wines that are more mineral, such as Chablis and Mâcon, or even Vin de Pays de Loire Chardonnay.

### **Grüner Veltliner :**

This is a native Austrian grape variety that produces wines that are rich and spicy while also having a certain delightful freshness. Choose younger wines that have not been aged in oak.

**Verdejo grape variety:**

Western Spain produces a grape called the Verdejo. It is under the Rueda denomination and is reminiscent of the slightly more modern Sauvignon. Try it for a change.

**Champagne :**

Oysters are a sought-after delicacy and tend to be eaten at times of celebration. As a party delicacy, it would be impossible not to mention Champagne. Choose the driest possible wine (extra-brut, brut non-dosage, brut 0...) and one that has aged significantly. Non-dosage champagnes, recently drained, should be the first to try. However, if you are eating cooked oysters, then choose the great Champagne Cuvees, preferably a vintage of about 15 years old. This will bring a refined bouquet that will go well with the dish.

Enjoy your tasting!