

current vintage, and two or three past vintages which have been held back for blending.

Why a non-vintage Champagne? Because the Champagne region is so far north that in an average of four years out of 10, the temperature and sunshine are not adequate to sufficiently ripen the grapes to produce the best possible wine, even with those three cool-climate grapes. In order to survive, they must blend several vintages in order to have new Champagne to sell in the majority of years when the weather doesn't allow for a Vintage Champagne.

When a good-weather year does make a Vintage Champagne possible, it will cost 30 to 50 percent more than the house's non-vintage, because the good conditions are so rare. They will also hold back some of that vintage's wines to use in their non-vintage Champagne blend. Most also produce a very expensive top-of-the-line Champagne (tête du cuvée) which is made from grapes from the best vineyards, in a vintage year. You know how much Dom Perignon costs. Some produce a rosé Champagne which costs as much or more than their vintage Champagne.

Champagne can be enjoyed properly at other occasions than celebrations. The different styles of the Champagne houses' non-vintage offerings allow for accompanying food throughout the meal, as do the basic styles of the Spanish, Italian and California sparkling wines. For instance, the light Spanish Cava, Asti Spumante and the lighter cuvées of non-vintage Champagnes are perfect matches with salads and appetizers. The more robust non-vintage and rosé Champagnes, Californians and Prosecco will pair well with most entrées including meats, because of their flavor weight and acid.

And if encouragement is needed to enjoy Champagne at other than celebratory occasions, adopt the philosophy of Madame Lily Bollinger who was in charge of the House of Bollinger from 1941 to 1971: "I drink Champagne when I am happy and when I am sad. Sometimes I drink it when I am alone. When I have company, I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it when I'm not hungry, and drink it when I am. Otherwise, I never touch it – unless I am thirsty." ■

Final Cut Productions

NOW INTRODUCING: INSTANT MOMENTS
LIVE STREAMING ONLINE VIDEO
FOR OUT-OF-TOWN RELATIVES

Video Wedding Packages Starting at \$700
High Quality Weddings For Affordable Prices

Check Out All Our Prices & Samples Online At...

www.finalcutproductions.biz



Now Accepting Credit & Debit Cards
(912)270-7188 • (912)832-2611

2 Blount Crossing Rd. Suite C, Darien, GA.

Martin's Vintage Rides



Available for Weddings and All Special Events

912 279-0177

www.martinvintagerides.com • E-mail: eagleridgeranch@bellsouth.net