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## Piper-Heidsieck Cuvée 'Essentiel' Extra Brut NV

<b>Grape Varietals:</b>	*Blend of Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier & Chardonnay
<b>Growing Region:</b>	Reims, France
<b>Chef de Cave:</b>	Régis Camus*

The Cuvée 'Essentiel' project started in 2008 - I caught up with Régis at the winery in June the following year to do a vin-clair tasting, when Camus explained and showed me base wines that were crafted due to market demand for something with less dosage, and in an extra brut style. Régis has said - this is a flagship wine for the Champagne House - with more age and less sweetness: what we see is the essence of the base wines and the house style.

Talking with Régis in July of this year - *"I am proud of this 'Cuvée Essentiel' - it symbolises the essence of our Champagnes. The extended age and lower dosage in this wine is a pure expression of the Piper-Heidsieck Champagne style: a crisp, structured and ardent wine."*

This wine shows how far Piper-Heidsieck has come since the arrival of Regis in 1994. It illustrates their confidence in the bare bones that go into the base wine. As Régis explains - *"It is not something new, but something slightly more bare, slightly more authentic and therefore all the more compelling"*.

Essentiel is exactly the same base wine as the Piper-Heidsieck Brut NV, but with a further 12-18 months of lees ageing, and less dosage added. The normal Brut NV has between 8-10g/l dosage whereas 'Essentiel' has 5-6g/l. The current release of 'Essentiel' is based mainly on the 2012 harvest and contains 15-20% reserve wines. Bottled in early 2013 to begin secondary fermentation and was disgorged in June 2017 - so just over 4 years on lees.

It must be noted that not every bottle of Piper-Heidsieck Brut NV can become Cuvée 'Essentiel' - as this is a selection Regis will make depending upon where in the cellar the bottles are stored - there are a few corners where things are just right, plus humidity and temperature.

Piper-Heidsieck is renowned for freshness. Structure from Pinot Noir which makes up 50-55% of the blend, a citrus core provided by Chardonnay and lifted fruit notes from Pinot Meunier, composed of grapes from up to 100 villages.

A wine with charm. Bright and inviting in the glass, with a well-defined aromatic purity showcasing citrus, white flesh pip-fruits, crisp-crunchy gold and green apples and blanched almonds. This 'Extra-Brut' style is vigorously ardent, crisp and firm but at the same time delicate across the palate. The lower dosage makes for a more food-friendly cuvée that maintains the principles of the Champagne House in an elegant and refined way. The palate is vibrantly confident, showcasing those defined pip-fruit flavours plus highlighting a citrus core, morning crisp apples, cashew nuts and a salty dry breeze to finish. *Treat yourself - this wine is definitely worth sharing.*

This Piper-Heidsieck Cuvée 'Essentiel' Extra Brut NV has 12% Alc./vol. Chill gently and serve in an aromatic wine glass at 8-10°C.

### Cellaring Potential:

Drinking perfectly this festive season; plus, will bring joy to your taste buds for another 5-6 years.

### Food Pairing Suggestions:

Perfect wine pairing with oysters, scallops, crayfish, gravlax salad, paella, Moroccan prawn & lemon couscous, also Lemon Meringue Pie and citrus sorbet - enjoy.



***A sophisticated wine to be enjoyed consciously and deliberately with a smile.***