

Popping Aces

I've been drinking wine for quite some time now, and have drunk (deeply!) from many thousands of bottles, and have seen many, many more than that. The last few years, from actually being in the wine business, has dramatically increased my exposure to wine of all the different stripes, polka dots, shapes, sizes, colors, and varietals from all over the world. And after having some of the greatest champagnes of the millennium¹ at our party the other week and all their lovely packaging I might be feeling a bit jaded.

But the one great² champagne not present at our bash just came in, and I've **never** seen anything as gorgeous as this trio of wines from the infamous Maison Cattier. It's simply beautiful; this little picture doesn't do it justice, but this might give you some idea:



The bottles are opaque and jewel colored after the three respective champagnes (Rosé, regular, and the Blanc de Blanc), but it's the box that stuns – it's essentially a smallish glossy piano black suitcase that neatly holds the trio. Wow! As far as describing it; I need to quote my good friend Charles C Mann says about such things: “the shit writes itself!” It only needs you to drink it.



And if the Cattier name doesn't ring a bell, you may have heard of it called Armand de Brignac Champagne, or even better known colloquially as the Ace of Spades, AKA the brand of champagne that Jay Z bought³ after being dissed by Cristal's managing director⁴. I asked my friend DJ Zen to explain the popularity in clubs with rappers, and he told me this –

Yo man, when I be drivin and drinkin yak⁵ and am headin fo the VIP room at the club, before spinnin I be chillin⁶ with my hoes⁷ and bros⁸, and I sure as hell don't

¹ A Marc Hebrart Brut Rosé, 2002 Dom Ruinart Brut, 2004 Dom Perignon Illuminated Magnum, a Roederer Cristal 2006, and a Dom Perignon, 2002 Rosé. You should have been there!

² At the very least, greatly marketed! I haven't actually had any yet, it's pretty damn rare, with a price to match.

³ Actually I'm not exactly sure what he bought. The NYT said “a new company led by Jay Z has acquired Armand de Brignac Champagne from Sovereign Brands”, but Cattier is the house producing the wine... let's just I guess he mostly owns the brand and most of the wine.

⁴ “... but what can we do? We can't forbid people from buying it. I'm sure Dom Pérignon or Krug would be delighted to have their business.”

⁵ Cognac.

⁶ Relaxing.

want no sparkling wine shit, I want the real deal. Elsewise I'll be dissed⁹ fo sure by my shorty¹⁰, who would rightfully say something like “yo’ dawg, what the fuck is this sparkling wine shit you’re trying to pass off as real champagne? Either Ace o’ Spades or you don’t get no play!”

In any case, as you can see, it’s a popular wine. Pop open a bottle at the crib, unleash the caviar, and spin some Jay Z¹¹ with your friends. I suppose the suitcase could be use for carrying stacks of cash as well.



Smilin’ snap of Jay Z and Señor Combs (AKA Diddy, P Diddy, Puff Daddy, da Puffster, etc., etc.) kickin back with an Ace

Winemaker’s notes:

Armand de Brignac Brut Silver: This beautiful pale-gold 100% Chardonnay Champagne has a light, clear bouquet possessed of youthful fruit notes and floral accents. The structure of the wine is delicate and light; the palate is dry, ethereal and complex. This Blanc de Blancs is bottled in a platinum bottle with matching antique silver labels and is an experience of ultimate luxury.

Armand de Brignac Brut Silver is pressed from an exclusive selection of white Chardonnay from famed Grand Cru villages including Cramant, Avize, and Oger.

Armand de Brignac Brut Rose: Armand de Brignac Rose is among the finest examples of the famous pink Champagne blend ever conceived, and is packaged in a brilliant pink-gold bottle with matching adornments.

Its beautiful color is achieved through assemblage, the process by which sparkling white wine is blended with a proportion of still Pinot Noir wine. The Pinot Noir is picked from old growth vines grown specifically for use in Rose Champagne. This Rose is announced with a rich bouquet of red fruits with delicate, smoky grilled notes behind. It is fresh and

⁷ Young genteel ladies.

⁸ Good friends of his.

⁹ To speak disrespectfully of or to criticize someone.

¹⁰ A young, usually attractive, woman he’s fond of.

¹¹ Who may or may not approve, but his bank account surely will.

full-bodied on the palate with aromas of strawberries and blackcurrant, and is lingering and complex in its finish. Armand de Brignac Rose is produced in extremely limited quantities - even by comparison to the boutique Brut Gold.

Armand de Brignac Brut Gold: Armand de Brignac is marvelously complex and full-bodied, with a bouquet that is both fresh and lively. Its sumptuous, racy fruit character is perfectly integrated with the wine's subtle brioche accents. Its texture is deliciously creamy and the palate has great depth and impact with a long and silky finish. A superb and singular example of a Prestige Champagne.