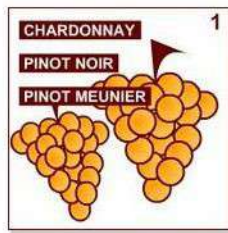
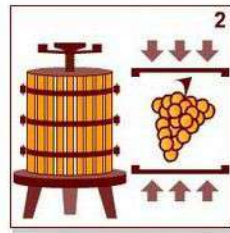


## Champagne wine: production method

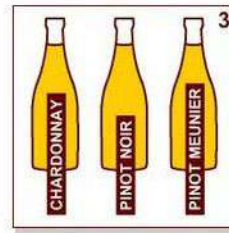
Here follow a list of the steps necessary for the production of Champagne, the famous French wine:



Three varieties of grapes are used to make Champagne: **Chardonnay, Pinot Noir** and **Pinot Meunier**. The 'Blanc de Blancs' is made just with Chardonnay, the 'Blanc de Noirs' just with Pinot Noir and Meunier.



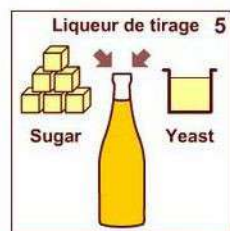
The grapes are **softly pressed**: the result is a **very clear must**, ready for the **first fermentation**. Selected yeasts are added: they transform sugar in alcohol and carbon dioxide. **The grape juice becomes wine.**



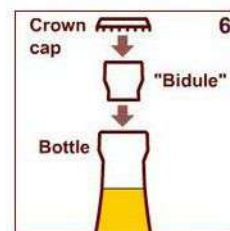
The main ingredients are finally ready: Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. Each one of these three 'base-wines' will enrich the Champagne with some of its typical traits.



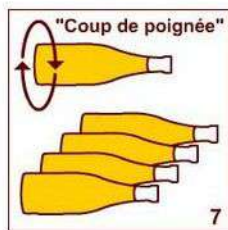
A 'cuvée' is a **mix of these three wines**: their quantities may vary, depending on the desired result. The only exceptions are, as already said, the 'blanc the blancs' and the 'blanc de noirs'.



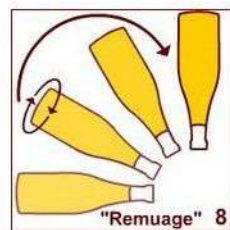
The 'liqueur de tirage', prepared with **sugar, selected yeasts** and **minerals**, is added to the cuvée to start the **second fermentation**.



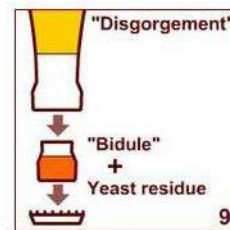
The 'bidule' is a small plastic cylinder meant to **collect the residue of the dead yeast**. It's inserted in the neck of the bottle before sealing it using a **crown cap**.



The bottles are placed horizontally in a fresh cellar (10°/12°c) for a couple of months: during this period the wine gets its bubbles ('prise de mousse'). A long rest follows: during it, the taste of the wine is improved by the yeast residue ('sur lattes'). Small rotations ('coup de poignée') prevent this residue from sticking to the sides of the bottles.



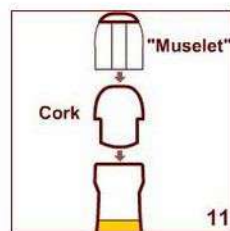
After a period that may vary from two up to ten years (and more), the wine is ready. The 'remuage' starts: the **bottles are slowly rotated** on both axes until they reach a vertical position. **The residue of the yeast falls in the bidule**. This operation can be performed both mechanically or by hand (using a 'pupitre').



The 'disgorgement' consists in opening the bottle. Before removing the crown cap, the neck is usually immersed in a **liquid at a temperature of -13°F (-25°C)**: this way the yeast residue freezes inside the bidule and this is easily extracted thanks to the internal pressure.



The opened bottle is topped up ('dosage') with the 'liqueur d'expédition'. This 'liqueur' is made with champagne, **sugar** (not always) and sometimes a little bit of **liquor**.



The bottle is **sealed with a cork**, this is secured to its neck with a **metal cage**, known as 'muselet'.