

SPARKLING WINES

It was only last year that sparkling wine saw a sudden jump in mentions on respondents's list, after a decade or more of gradual growth. It now accounts for 6.4 percent of the most popular wines in US restaurants, with Champagne taking four of the top five spots. Changes are afoot in the category, though, as Billecart-Salmon dislodged Veuve Clicquot from its 19-year lock on the top spot, and growers continued to surge, with Chartogne-Taillet coming in at number five. Sommeliers are offering a wider range of choices and it's resonating with their customers. "People's experience with Champagne so often is Veuve Clicquot or Moët Chandon, which tend to be more expensive and not like a wine," says Jack Mason of *Marta* in NYC. "When they have something

that's less expensive with more interesting flavors, they get it."

Gains among other sparklers show a broadening of the category beyond Champagne and Prosecco. Oregon makes its first appearance in a decade, and Cava's two top-ten placements reflect Spain's strong showing in this year's poll results.

In follow-up interviews, many sommeliers talked up *petillant naturel* wines, or "pét-nats." Bryan Flewelling of *Eventide Oyster Co.* in Portland, Maine, is just one fan: "Pét-nats go well with our cuisine because they tend to be simple, crisp and fresh," he notes. "They don't get to the table and demand all the attention. They are one player in the drama of the meal."



"I'm really happy selling more and more Champagne. We've had high sales for years, and it's only gotten better."

—Henry Beylin, *Gjelina*, Venice, CA

MOST POPULAR SPARKLING WINES

Rank	Brand	Bottling	Avg. Price
1	Billecart-Salmon	Champagne Brut Réserve	\$111
		Champagne Brut Rosé	\$164
		Champagne Extra Brut	\$130
2	Veuve Clicquot	Champagne Brut Yellow Label	\$131
		Champagne Brut Rosé	\$125
3	Argyle	Willamette Valley Brut	\$62
		Willamette Valley Rosé	\$70
4	Krug	Champagne Grand Cuvée	\$192
5	Chartogne-Taillet	Champagne Cuvée Ste-Anne	\$99
6	Raventós i Blanc	Conca del Riu Anoia Brut L'Hereu	\$60
		Conca del Riu Anoia De Nit	\$65
7	Schramsberg Vineyards	Napa Valley Blanc de Blancs	\$75
8	Avinyo	Cava	\$35
		Cava Rosat	\$60
9	Bêrèche et Fils	Champagne Brut Réserve	\$124
10	Bruno Paillard	Champagne Première Cuvée	\$122
		Cima di Conegliano	Prosecco Conegliano Extra Dry
12	Domaine Ste. Michelle	Columbia Valley Brut	\$28
13	Naveran	Cava Brut Nature	\$43
		Cava Reserve Blanc de Blanc	\$43
14	Roederer Estate	Anderson Valley Brut	\$49
15	Laurent Perrier	Champagne Brut	\$95
		Pol Roger	Champagne Brut
17	J. Lassalle	Champagne 1er Cru	\$100
		Drusian	Prosecco
19	La Marca	Prosecco	\$23

PINOT GRIS & GRIGIO

Pinot grigio's popularity continued to slide this year, accounting for less than two percent of the most popular restaurant wines. In Denver, Ryan Fletter at *Barolo Grill* finds that "it's almost as if pinot grigio is like merlot. People ask, 'Do you have anything like that, but not that?'"

Even when customers do ask for pinot grigio, many sommeliers are less inclined to offer it. At *Amali* in NYC, Francine Mace offers Terra-dora Fiano di Avellino instead. "It's not pinot grigio at all, but it has a lot going on, and guests just see 'Italian white.'"

The push-back is clear in the Most Popular list: After 18 years leading the category, Santa Margherita is now at number five, while Jermann's full-bodied Friulian pinot grigio rose to the top.

MOST POPULAR PINOT GRIS & GRIGIO

Rank	Brand	Bottling	Avg. Price
1	Jermann	Friuli	\$51
2	Cielo	Toscana	\$28
3	Alois Lageder	Alto Adige	\$42
4	Scarpetta	Friuli	\$36
5	Santa Margherita	Alto Adige	\$60