



Oh, the agony!

Resident agony uncle
Kit Hesketh-Harvey
solves your dilemmas

Doing it in style

Q I recently got engaged and, as this will be my first—and hopefully only—marriage, I have my heart set on a big white wedding. My wife-to-be is divorced and thinks it should be a discreet affair. I can't help wanting to celebrate our union in style. Can you suggest a happy compromise?

D. H., West Sussex

A Congratulations, you have selected a woman whose wisdom is born of experience and a lady of taste. A white—that is, virginal—wedding, as she has rightly divined, is off the cards, unless you're prepared to endure lubricious giggling from the groundlings' pews. Stylish, I'd venture to suggest, isn't the same as big.

You are, evidently, happy to incur expense. Weddings are brutally short and, for the bridal couple, confusing. Why not take over a hotel of irreproachable style, footing the bill for your fewer but more meaningful guests, for a week? Nothing too jet-laggingly remote, but discreet—Trasierra outside Seville, perhaps, or the Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni at Bellagio. You may actually remember a few details of a longer occasion and the honeymoon will be taken care of with the same cheque.

What to drink this week Organic and biodynamic Champagne



Those in the know believe this is the future of Champagne, explains Harry Eyres

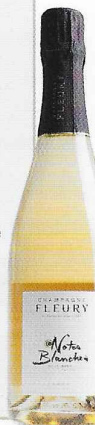
You might not think that the words 'organic' and 'Champagne' go naturally together—the Champagne region is quite far north and not a stranger to summer rain, so not the easiest place to grow grapes. However, no less a figure than Jean-Baptiste Lecaillon, *chef de cave* of Louis Roederer, recently went on the record saying 'the future is organic and biodynamic'. These aren't empty words: in 2017, 100% of Roederer's substantial vineyard holdings were farmed organically.

Why you should be drinking it

Roederer—as well as an increasing number of smaller producers—isn't just going organic, but is inspired by biodynamics, the arcane yet increasingly influential method stemming from Rudolf Steiner, involving adherence to lunar cycles and preparations of dung. Being organic or biodynamic doesn't mean your wine tastes good, but avoiding chemical fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides and paying attention to the health of the soil seems a good start.

What to buy

Louis Roederer Brut Premier (£45; www.waitrosecellar.com) has been showing particularly well in recent tastings—it's crisp and appley on the nose, leading to richness and complexity on the palate. Champagne Fleury, based in the Côtes des Bar in the far south of the Champagne region, is a pioneer of biodynamic Champagne. The Blanc de Noirs Brut (£36; www.bbr.com) has complexity and smoky fullness from 100% Pinot Noir. Fleury Notes Blanches 2011 (*right*, £38.50; www.bbr.com) is, most unusually, made from 100% Pinot Blanc and has remarkable mineral intensity. Champagne André Beaufort Brut Nature Millesimé 2010 (£66; www.thegoodwineshop.co.uk), from another organic pioneer with vineyards both in Ambonnay and Polisy in the Côtes des Bar, has citrus freshness, but also beautiful ripeness.



Unmissable events

Exhibition

November 29–December 21 'Hugh Buchanan: Fragments of a Classical Twilight' (right), John Martin Gallery, Albemarle Street, London W1. Watercolours telling 'the story of an encounter with a building at a particular moment in time', evoking the last great age of Classical architecture, from London Livery Companies to the Gilded Age mansions of Rhode Island (020-7499 1314; www.jmlondon.com)



Normal garden admission applies (01805 626810; www.rhs.org.uk/rosemoor)

Wine sale

December 9 Warden Abbey Vineyard Christmas Wine Sale, Southill Park, Bedfordshire. Locally grown white and sparkling wines will be available to taste and buy in aid of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity. 11am–4pm, free entry, parking and mince pies (07981 113714; www.wardenvineyard.org.uk)

Carol concert

December 3 Carols by Candlelight, St Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, London SE1. Join David and Jonathan Dibleby for carols sung by the children of Farringtons School, plus special guests, followed by a drinks reception. All

money raised goes towards the work of Dibleby Cancer Care. From 6.30pm, children £7, adults £12 (www.diblebycancer.org)

Book now

December 19 and 21 Private tour of The Royal Yacht Britannia, Ocean Drive, Leith, Edinburgh. 'Behind the ropes' tour with unprecedented access to the Engine Room, followed by Champagne, mulled wine and mince pies in the State Drawing Room, plus a Britannia Christmas pudding, made on board, to take home. 5.30pm–7pm, £50pp (www.royalylachtbritannia.co.uk; 0131-555 5566)

years after the capital's river last froze, the Museum of London will be transformed into an immense re-creation of the frost fairs once run on the Thames, with a series of special events and workshops (www.museumoflondon.org.uk; 020-7001 9844)

Gardens

Until January 5, 2019 Rosemoor Glow, RHS Garden Rosemoor, Great Torrington, Devon. See the gardens in a new light with trees, shrubs and sculptures lit with colour-changing illuminations. The lake will also be lit for the first time, as will the Unknown Soldier and ceramic poppy Armistice display.

Fair

November 29–December 1 The Newburgh Priory Christmas Fair, Coxwold, North Yorkshire. More than 20 exhibitors selling food, books, jewellery, clothing and more, plus wreath-making and gingerbread-house workshops (from £15, to be booked in advance). Thursday drinks reception with carols from 5pm to 9pm, advance tickets £10; Friday and Saturday, 10am–5pm, £5 on the door (www.priddenprandevents.com)

December 5 Gift of Sight Fair, Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, London SW3. Do your Christmas shopping with a conscience at this fair in aid of St John Eye Hospital, with 10% of everything you spend going to charity. 12pm–6pm, Champagne reception 6pm–8.30pm. General admission £5, reception £35 (www.stjohnseyehospital.org)

Until January 6, 2019 The Museum of London Frost Fair, London Wall, EC2. Two hundred