



Champagne Unfiltered

Taste and Tour with Philadelphia-area wine writer and educator Brian Freedman, R2L's chef-owner Daniel Stern and Chief Wine Sherpa Ben Weinberg



RESTAURANT | LOUNGE



R2L's chef-owner Daniel Stern and Chief Wine Sherpa Ben Weinberg

November 11—18, 2012



Champagne: Just saying the word brings to mind images of luxury and the good life. Popping open a bottle of bubbly is one of the great pleasures of the wine world, and Wine on the Road now offers you the opportunity to peek behind the curtain and experience first-hand what makes Champagne so special.

Walk the vineyards and taste with the legendary people behind the wines that movie stars and royalty have always loved. Are you a fan of Taittinger? We will be hosted by Vitalie Taittinger, the lady on the winery's now iconic poster. Love Veuve Clicquot? You'll be thrilled to spend several hours tasting on the premises.

Chateau les Crayeres, one of the top five-star hotels in the world, will be our base for the week. Special menus at Michelin-starred restaurants and authentic bistros are accompanied by specific Champagnes--and, often, the winemakers themselves--and feature everything from authentic local specialties like Ardennes ham and Chaource fromage to the finest haute cuisine in France.

Visit acclaimed wine estates selected by Brian, Dan and Ben for their distinctive expressions of local terroir and culture. Experience up-close-and-personal time with well-known winemakers and taste the results of their passion and effort. Between winery tours and tastings, prepare to be intrigued by local artisans. Join the locals in an evening stroll, sip coffee, and search out tasty snacks. Of course, there will always be time to enjoy Les Crayeres--including the putting green on the front lawn--or even to simply enjoy a cocktail at Bar la Rotonde. Optional diversions during the week include a cooking course, a shopping tour focused on artisanal products, a hot-air balloon tour of the vineyards, and an afternoon at a luxurious spa.

More on Chef Daniel Stern

With an eye to the future, Daniel Stern updates traditional American flavors with a modern twist.



A self-taught chef, Stern has spent his culinary career in America's top kitchens. He worked closely with the nation's leading chefs – Rocco DiSpirito at Dava, Gray Kunz at the St. Regis Hotel, Daniel Boulud at Daniel, Jean-Georges Vongerichten at Mercer Kitchen – and was executive chef at Le Bec-Fin in Philadelphia.

Ready for restaurant kitchen(s) of his own, he launched Daniel Stern Restaurants in late 2005. In five years' time, it would grow to include Gayle, Rae, MidAtlantic and R2L, culinary experiences that blend bold cuisine with dynamic spaces. R2L's sleek, sophisticated restaurant and private event venue soars 37 floors above the city at Two Liberty Place and features world-class creative American cuisine.



Chef Stern has received much acclaim, including: *Food & Wine's* Best Restaurant Dish in Philadelphia in 2006 at Gayle; inclusion in *Esquire's* Best New Restaurants 2007 for Rae; recognition by *Bon Appetit* for one of the country's Best Daily Specials in 2010 at

MidAtlantic; and inclusion in *Gayot.com's* list of Top 10 New Restaurants in the U.S. for R2L in 2011.

More on Wine Sherpa Brian Freedman and Wine On The Road

Wine writer, educator and sommelier Brian Freedman contributes to *Wine Enthusiast*, *John Mariani's Virtual Gourmet*, *Philadelphia Style Magazine* and *Affluent Magazine*. He is also the restaurant critic for *Philadelphia Weekly*, *Suburban Life Magazine* and *South Jersey Magazine*, and has appeared on Fox 29's "Good Day Philadelphia," Comcast's "Your Morning on CN8," and ABC7's "View From The Bay" in San Francisco. He is also the Philadelphia Ambassador for Champagne and Port.



**Brian Freedman
in Champagne**

Wine On The Road was created by wine writer and Chief Wine Sherpa Ben Weinberg to share his passion for wine and insider access to winemakers and their estates with small groups of adventurous wine enthusiasts. Wine Sherpas lead wine lovers on tours of Tuscany and Piedmont in Italy, Burgundy and Champagne in France, Spain, Chile, the Napa Valley and many other destinations. Wine On The Road's 2012 Champagne Unfiltered focuses on top wineries, restaurants and lodgings. This luxurious tour combines award-winning wine, exquisite dining and superior lodging into a one-of-a-kind experience exposing the best of this region's flair and flavor.

Champagne Unfiltered Tour Highlights (Preliminary Itinerary)

Sunday, November 11—Monday, November 12

Our luxury Wine on the Road coach meets you at Charles de Gaulle airport for the beautiful drive to our week's lodgings at renowned, five-star Chateau les Crayeres, named Best Hotel in the World in 2002. After settling in, enjoy dinner downstairs at Brasserie le Jardin. We start the next morning with an introduction to the region and then visit Taittinger, the only family-owned Grand Maison and producer of some of the most sought-after fizz in the world, where we'll have lunch with Vitalie



**Taittinger's
Cellars**

Taittinger. To wrap up this special day we head off to Moet for some Dom Perignon and then a tasting and dinner at Bonville in the Côte de Blancs.

Tuesday, November 13—Thursday, November 15

Take the morning to explore downtown Reims, then a tour and lunch at Vilmart et Cie. is followed by dinner at Champagne Pommery, whose caves hold more than a million bottles. We spend the next morning tasting with Master Sommelier Philippe Jamesse, one of the top wine experts in France, and then have lunch at historic Cafe du Palais in downtown Reims. Quality time at Bollinger then precedes dinner at our hotel's Michelin Three-Star Restaurant Les Crayeres. Thursday starts at Veuve Clicquot but you'll have the afternoon to yourself --perhaps a quick trip to downtown Epernay?--and dinner will be held at Les Aulnois, a local-favorite restaurant housed in a gorgeous chateau not far from Epernay.



**Incredible
Les Crayeres**

Friday, November 16—Saturday, November 17

Friday's focus will be on family-run estates, beginning with food-friendly Ployez-Jacquemart. Lunch at this property is followed by a tasting at Champagne Jean Milan in Oger where we'll be joined by Laetitia Billiot of H. Billiot Fils. Our evening is capped with dinner at the 18th-century Chateau de la Marquetterie. The next morning, Collard-Picard owner Olivier Collard explains the underappreciated Pinot Meunier grape and joins us for lunch. Our final visit is with Gilles Dumangin of J. Dumangin Fils, a tiny house that produces soulful bubbles, and we bring the week to a close than with one final dinner at Restaurant Les Crayeres.



**Special
Experiences**

Sunday, November 18

Our Wine on the Road van transports you to Charles DeGaulle International Airport and we bid you au revoir . . . until we see you again!