



CHAMPAGNE **TAITTINGER**

Reims

THE TRICENTENAIRE

There are very few 'Champagne Houses' like Taittinger that still bear their proprietors' name. Taittinger is, above all else, the story of an exacting family with a passion for their work, who decided they would never compromise on quality. It's the high proportion of Chardonnay used in creating their different editions that is key to the secret of Taittinger Champagne's very characteristic style, the essence of finesse and elegance, recognised all over the world.

Yesterday, Taittinger Champagne was honoured to celebrate the visit of Peter the Great, Tsar of Russia, to Reims on 22 June 1717, and more particularly to Saint-Nicaise Abbey, the current location of Taittinger's cellars.

The Tsar was very open to foreign cultures and particularly interested in scientific and mystical phenomena; the enigma that he had come to observe concerned one of the abbey's buttresses, which was said to shake when a particular bell was rung.

Celebrating this event offered a unique opportunity to invite the descendants of this illustrious character. And so it was that Prince and Princess George Yourievsky came to follow their ancestor's footsteps.

The Russian Ambassador, Alexandre Orlov, also came to enjoy this celebration, honouring the historical and political link that is existant between France and Russia for very long. Explicitly he expressed his desire that this friendship be nourished and continued. A desire which is gladly shared by Arnaud Robinet, Mayor of Reims.

During the ceremony, an icon in the traditional Russian style created by the artist Marie Courbe-Michollet was unveiled. It represents Saint Nicaise and Saint Eutropie: brother and sister who were massacred by barbarians in 407, and at the origin of a church dedicated to the Holy Virgin built on the site of the current Cathedral of Reims. After recalling this tragic story, an Orthodox Christian priest blessed the icon, bringing an element of piety to the occasion and honouring the abbey's religious past.

The link between Taittinger and the Russian spirit was evident yesterday in the meticulous attention that Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger applied to every detail. He noted that Russia has always been close to his family's heart: "My brother's name is Vladimir. My mother was always fascinated by Russian art and literature... And my father once received Nikita Khrushchev". These sincere, affectionate declarations, without doubt, contributed to making the occasion a special day of friendship.

Later the same day a banquet was held at the Demeure des Comtes de Champagne. That was were to the sound of balalaika music, a bottle of Brut Reserve was presented, decorated with gold and engravings in the style of the illustrious Russian jeweller, Pierre-Karl Fabergé.

A limited edition of 500 bottles has been produced, as a symbol of Taittinger's bond with Russia and this pioneering Tsar, who, thanks to his curiosity and open-mindedness, explored other countries in the sense of creating a better future for his own.

GALLERY



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