

San Francisco Chronicle

NV Mandois Brut Rosé Grande Reserve Champagne (\$50)

-- **What sold us:** The small Champagne house of Mandois, in Pierry, has one of the most unusual takes on pink bubbly to come over the transom. Not only is Mandois' style defined by oak aging - which many Champenois (though not, say, Krug) oppose - but the blend is truly unique. It's one-third from saignee (bled from tanks of red wine), one-third from its regular Brut Champagne and one-third from red wine made from Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. That adds up to a lot of red grapes, which explains why it tastes like a red wine in a Champagne costume, full of muscular berry and dark loam, with a subtle tannic grip on the finish. With this much structure and presence, there's nothing wussy about pink wine.

-- **Where to find:** **Plumpjack** Wines on Fillmore (San Francisco)

- Jon Bonné