



Hine Antique XO Cognac

Country:	France
Region:	Jarnac
Appellation:	Fine Champagne Controlee VSOP Blended eaux-de-vie from Grande Champagne grapes
Grapes:	100% Ungi Blanc (Trebbiano)
Style:	XO
Owner:	Thomas Hine & Co
Status:	Operational
Age:	aged for 45 to 55 years and more
Cask Type:	French Oak Cask
Colour:	Dark Gold
Flavour Profile:	Fruity - Fig - Apricot - Honey
Allergens:	Not Known
Bottle size:	70cl - abv: 40.0%



Notes of iris, fresh apricot, acacia and white pepper.

As the years pass, the cognac takes on a radiant amber hue and, while always maintaining the fruit as its primary aroma, unleashes hints of walnut, freshly toasted bread and blonde tobacco.

Three hundred and eighty-one kilometres through France. Four départements crossed before the Atlantic Ocean is reached, with Rochefort as the last leg. From the low plateaux of the Limousin, Charente appears gentle and bucolic, softer than its imposing neighbour, Garonne. This aquatic Via Agrippa traces its path to distant destinations, bearing eaux-de-vie fashioned by Charente's limestone soils and the skill of the region's winegrowers, distillers, coopers and cellar masters. Before Rochefort and the ocean lies Saintes. Further upstream, the abundant town of Cognac. And then, on the right bank of the river emerges the discreet Jarnac. It is here in 1763 that the adventure of the House of Hine begins...

The year is 1791. A young Englishman sets out from his native Dorset to learn the secrets of how cognac, his father's favourite tippie, is produced. Thomas Hine was the sixth of twelve children and had just turned sixteen. His sense of timing is questionable though, given how inopportune a moment it is for an Englishman to find himself in France! Fleeing the French Revolution, he was imprisoned at the Château de Jarnac, where he remained sequestered for several months. His marriage to Françoise-Elisabeth, the daughter of his hosts, ensues. In 1817, Thomas Hine gives his name to this House, established on the banks of the Charente in 1763.

Since this dramatic arrival, six generations of the Hine family have succeeded one another at the head of Thomas Hine & Co. The tasting rooms at 16 Quai de l'Orangerie have seen it all, from the Great French Wine Blight to local conflicts, world wars, first bottlings, international incidents, economic booms and slumps, legendary river floods, connoisseur parties and exalted blends. Today, under the watchful eye of sixth-generation member Bernard Hine, a dedicated team of twenty people strive to preserve and act upon 254 years of spirited history.

Cognac region. Like the Cognac area, there are 3 important areas for Armagnac: Bas Armagnac, Haut Armagnac, and Tenareze. The region the Armagnac is made is usually shown on the bottle and if not, is probably a blend from more than two regions. The aristocracy in the region of Armagnac were the politically powerful Albret family from the 14th through to the 16th century and were against the monarchy of France, introducing Protestantism to south-west France, and during their rule the local spirit or 'eau-de-vie' was commercialised and sold in France as Armagnac.

The House of Hine draws its identity from the heart of two Premier Crus (in a region where Crus number just six): the Grande Champagne and the Petite Champagne. In the village of Bonneuil, 70 hectares of vineyards unfurl their rows of Ugni Blanc vines across rolling valleys – a landscape that is characteristic to Grande Champagne. Limestone rocks peep out at the foot of the vines like a promise of future vivacity.

Once the autumn grape harvest is finished, distillation on lees concentrates the aromas of these resolutely acidic white wines tenfold. There in the heat of the still, everything hinges on precision and alchemy, transforming the work of the vine into a clear and impetuous eau-de-vie suffused with intense notes of banana and fresh pear, carnations and violets.

At Hine, French oak casks are used to age the eau-de-vie selected with a view to showcasing their aromatic profile. The aim is not to mask the flavours with dominant woody tones, but to enhance them as part of a delicate exchange between the eau-de-vie and oak staves. This finesse is the result of two key choices made during the manufacturing of the barrels: the selection of wood with a very fine grain and the light toasting it then receives. As the years pass, the cognac takes on a radiant amber hue and, while always maintaining the fruit as its primary aroma, unleashes hints of walnut, freshly toasted bread and blonde tobacco. Since 1962, the House of Hine has been awarded a Royal Warrant by Appointment to Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II, and remains the only official supplier of cognac to the British monarchy.

The Cognac AOC is a controlled appellation of origin and is made up of six districts, which are Bois à Terroir Bons Bois – Fins Bois – Borderies and the two most important, Grande Champagne and Petite Champagne.

After many decades of maturing, an average of 45 to 55 years they reach perfection.

Tasting Note

APPEARANCE

Dark gold in colour

NOSE.

Aromatic richness. Dried and crystallised fruit - fig, apricot, honey with a hint of liquorice.

PALATE

A full and supple body with notes of perfume and spice, this is a particularly spicy cognac with zinging top notes.

FINISH

Complex, balanced velvety and subtle.

THE IDEAL SERVE

Accompanied after dinner with a few pieces of orange chocolate.

