

## A California Sparkler for Sunday Brunch, or Dinner

### Domaine Carneros Brut Carneros 2005

Dana Nigro

Posted: November 2, 2009

When the weather isn't nice, my husband and I like to spend a lazy Sunday making brunch and enjoying a glass of sparkling wine. Instead of our usual inexpensive cava or Prosecco, I stepped it up one recent weekend and popped open a bottle of Domaine Carneros Brut Carneros 2005 I had purchased early this year. Priced about \$25, this California bubbly is a blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay aged three years in bottle.

Fragrant with fresh citrus, the 2005 Brut revealed lovely lemon, orange, Golden Delicious apple and pear flavors, finishing with a hint of toasted panettone. It stood up well enough to a ham-and-cheese omelet, and complemented the mixed-berry salad, but deserved a subtler, more complex meal. The remainder of the bottle was even better that evening with grilled chicken spiced up with a touch of Dijon mustard and cayenne. 90 points, non-blind.

Domaine Carneros earned organic certification for its 350 acres of state vineyards in April 2008; the 2005 vintage was the first of the three-year transition period, but the estate had been experimenting with organic blocks since the mid-1990s. CEO and winemaker Eileen Crane was an early adopter of solar power, installing a large array on the winery in 2003, and other energy-saving practices such as a night-cooling system. And the wine is suitable for strict vegans, as the winery uses bentonite, not animal products for fining.

WineSpectator.com members: Read the original blind-tasting review for Domaine Carneros Brut Carneros 2005 (92, \$26).

• Plus, get our quick list of Top Values among all sparkling wines.



Senior editor Dana Nigro joined Wine Spectator in 1998. She is managing editor of WineSpectator.com.

### Dana Nigro

[About Me](#)

[All My Picks](#)

[Weekly Picks Main Page](#)

[About Our Tastings](#)