

Shmanners 292: Champagne

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Teresa: Mm. Is this shmetiquette?

Travis: No, actually it's only shmetiquette if it comes from the Shmetiquette region. This is *Shmanners*!

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to *Shmanners*.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: [sighs heavily]

Travis: So good!

Teresa: So good. Listen.

Travis: So good.

Teresa: Here's the deal. It's— it's— it's always good, because it could always be worse.

Travis: Oh?

Teresa: [laughs loudly]

Travis: Is that— I think that's nice? I think that's nice. I think that's good. Yeah, it's, uh, you know, rampin' up.

Teresa: [singing] It's the holiday season...

Travis: Yeah, we are—[laughs]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Some— we decided in our house that we, as well as getting ready for everything else, I also need to redo the floor in the basement so that someone can stay down there on Christmas Eve.

So it's a perfectly normal, not chaotic time here.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, at all. And it's great, and everything's wonderful.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Um, but you know what else it is?

Teresa: What?

Travis: It's the time of the year for a lot of celebrations.

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: A lot of celebrations. Uh, it's the holiday season. Um—

Teresa: [singing] And hoop-dee-doo.

Travis: [singing half-heartedly] And tra-la-la—[speaking] I don't know the—

Teresa: And dickory dock, is that it?

Travis: And I think that, uh, at least for me, it's impossible for me to not associate champagne with celebrations, at the very least, you know, sparkling wine, and we'll get into this. But—

Teresa: I feel like those— those bubbles make the occasion a celebration.

Travis: Well, I think— we had a question about this. Um, where Scarlet asked, "Why was it picked as a celebratory drink?"

And I don't know if there's an actual reason listed in the notes or anything, but it has to be the pop, right?

Teresa: I think so.

Travis: Right? Where there's something about the— the anticipation of it. It's a communal event. When you watch somebody do it and pop it, right? It's like that, "Ohhh, ahh!" Right? It's— it's like a little cheer as it pops, and the—

Teresa: It's a tiny surprise party for your drinking glass.

Travis: Wait, and as you said, the bubbles, right?

Teresa: The bubbles.

Travis: It's— it's visually interesting. It has that, like, foamy quality to it. Um, and, can I just start off with an anecdote that has— that's [sounding it out] tan— tangentially— right? Whatever.

Teresa: Well, of course you can.

Travis: Connected to champagne.

Teresa: That's your job on this show.

Travis: That's correct. Miller High Life has the nickname "Champagne of Beers."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And it is because it used to be their, like, fancy, expensive line, right? And it was the beer for, like, rich folks, for celebration. And then they were like, "Well, we wanna open the market up and we wanna get more people to drink it," right? So they started marketing it to, uh, the common folk as well, at which point rich people were like, "Well, we don't wanna drink it anymore."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And so then it became a kind of, uh, almost sarcastic, ironic, "Champagne of Beers," but there was a time where it was the champagne of beers.

Teresa: I believe that advertising technique is called snobbery.

Travis: Sure. That's true. Uh, also, one other thing. I have a tattoo of clinking champagne glasses—

Teresa: You do.

Travis: —on my left shoulder, in honor of Teresa, because every day with you is a celebration.

Teresa: Aww.

Travis: Yeah. Because I will also say, just to show a little bit of my bougie side—our bougie side? I think... ooh, slowly, a little bit, our favorite wine is sparkling wine.

Teresa: Well, I— I ain't above a bottle of five dollar bubbly, so...

Travis: This is true! And this is the thing, is that when I tell people that they're like, "What?" And I think 'cause they're imagining, like, hundred dollar champagne. And it's like, "No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no."

Teresa: No, no, no, no, no, no, no. [laughs]

Travis: Sparkling wine, guys. Not champagne. And then people are like, "Well, but aren't you only supposed to drink it in celebration?"

I'm like, "Well, every day is a celebration with my beautiful wife!"

Teresa: Aww.

Travis: So... should we, like, right out the gate talk about, like, champagne versus, like, the other kind? Or do we wanna, like, get into history, or... ?

Teresa: Well, okay. So, let's— let's do a brief history, okay? Um—

Travis: So, you know wine? [laughs quietly]

Teresa: You know wine.

Travis: We put gas in it. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: Uh, okay. The champagne region of France is a bountiful area in the northeast of France, just a little bit outside of Paris, okay? It's well known for wine-making, uh, long before the bubbly were being manufactured.

Um, the champagne, as the bubbly sparkling wine we all know and love, didn't actually exist until probably the 17th century, but its origins can be traced back nearly 2000 years to ancient Romans.

Travis: Oh, okay!

Teresa: Uh, in 98— 987...

Travis: Oh, 9-8-7!

Teresa: Hugh Capet was crowned—

Travis: 9-8-7! Wait, can we just—9-8-7, huh?

Teresa: Yeah...

Travis: Okay, that's not important, but I liked it.

Teresa: Was crowned the King of France at the Cathedral of Reims and, um, started the tradition of hosting monarchs in Champagne, the area.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, so that he could show off the local wines, right? Um, and he is pretty much the reason why French wine is synonymous with good wine.

Travis: Oh, because he worked so hard, he did a full blown, like, ad campaign for it.

Teresa: Totally did.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Totally did. Um, so the drink at the time was this early wine, which was a pale, pinkish drink made from pinot noir, right?

Travis: Okay. So a little bit like a blush, or it was just pale because...

Teresa: Well, I mean, it would've been a little bit like rosé.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Uh, and the bubbles were actually a mistake.

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: [makes buzzer noise]

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Is that the right sting? For that?

Travis: No.

Teresa: No, it's not.

Travis: Womp womp. No?

Teresa: No, that's a disappointment sting.

Travis: [*The Price is Right* losing horn]

Teresa: Maybe that's it.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Yeah, yeah. Um, so... the people of the region, champenois—

Travis: I'm sorry, what?

Teresa: That's the name. That's their name.

Travis: That people from Champagne?

Teresa: The people of Champagne, champenois.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Were jealous of their neighbors in Burgundy, who were very well-known already for their very famous wines.

Travis: And color.

Teresa: Um, well, because—

Travis: They invented the color, too.

Teresa: They— well...

Travis: You don't know, do you? I don't know either, but I said it with confidence.

Teresa: [wheezes] Okay. So, southern Burgundy, uh, was the perfect climate for the very bold, delicious, red wines that they made. And, I mean, it's very interesting because the climates in France are quite varied, right? Especially when it comes to growing grapes.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: But, the wine growers in Champagne, they wanted to try and copy the wines from southern France. It didn't work. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah. It's different grapes.

Teresa: Because changes in temperature vastly affect wine production. Um, not only when you grow the grapes, when you ferment the grapes, it— the temperature is... is very important. So what happened is they would make the

wine and put it in their cellar to age, and then the cold winters would stop the fermentation. The yeast would go to sleep, right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: But then in the summer, the yeast would wake up all at once, and the sudden change caused carbon dioxide gas to release inside the bottle.

Travis: But it was sealed, so it had nowhere to go.

Teresa: So it would explode.

Travis: [gasps] Oh no!

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Is then when they started developing the different bottle shapes?

Teresa: Mm-hmm, and the thickness of the glass, right?

Travis: Yeah, so this is a thing. Um, the shape of a champagne bottle and, like, that curved bottom, uh, is all about, like, the structural integrity of the bottle so that it doesn't shatter under the pressure.

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: Same with the shape of the cork, which is differently shaped than, like, you know, a red wine cork or a white that goes all the way in. It has to be, like, spread out and pressurized once it's inside so that the cork won't pop.

Teresa: Right. So it was an accident, and they were— they tried to avoid the carbonation really, like, at all costs. It was, at the time, considered to be a tragic flaw in an otherwise beautiful bottle of wine, right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But then, as things do, tastes changed. Following the death of King Louis XIV uh, in 17... wait. X-I-V. 14.

Travis: 14, you nailed it.

Teresa: I did it. I did it. In 1715. Uh—

Travis: Can I just say, this is a thing that recurs on the show of you will hit, like, a Roman numeral, and I will watch you go, "Louis the... " [wheezes]

Teresa: [laughs loudly]

Travis: [laughs] And it's funny to me every time. 'Cause it's— what I see is you know it—

Teresa: I know it. [laughs]

Travis: —and then you go, "That's not it. No."

Teresa: "That's not it."

Travis: "There's no way."

Teresa: [laughs] Self doubt. It's a terrible thing.

Travis: I know. It gets you every time.

Teresa: Okay. And now we are in the court of Phillippe II, better known as the Duke of Orleans, right?

Travis: Sure, oh yeah, that guy. I know of him from... Shakespeare.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: But is he in *Three Musketeers*? I think he is.

Teresa: Maybe. And he said "I like it," and so everyone else was like, "Of course! I like it too!"

Travis: This is, by the way, one of my favorite things throughout history, is a lot of things that we think of as, like, really fancy and, like, high-priced now...

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: ... were things that were, like, discards. Or, like, oysters, lobster, champagne, these things that were like, "Oh, no. Gross." [laughs]

Teresa: [laughs] Alright. Um, so... champagne is that very specific wine from that very specific region with the very specific bubbles that everybody loves. And then in the 20th century we start to hit a few little bumps in the road.

Travis: Like a— like a war or two?

Teresa: Not only that. Uh, more like an outbreak of... I'm gonna butcher this. Phylloxera.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Okay. So, they're bugs, right? Tiny little bugs that feed on the leaves and roots of grapevines, and it actually drove— the devastation in France was so widespread in 1910 and 1911 that vineyard growers began rioting.

Travis: Wow! Okay.

Teresa: And because of this bug, right? Many of the French artistic icons were turning to absinthe.

Travis: Okay!

Teresa: Instead of champagne. And this market that they had very carefully, over centuries, like, defined as, like, the epitome of sophistication was just crumbling because of this bug.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And the, uh, Russian and American clients were lost to the Russian Revolution and Prohibition and the World Wars and... [sighs]

Travis: It was just not a great time.

Teresa: Not a great time!

Travis: To be a vintner.

Teresa: But like many things, after World War II, we got a boom.

Travis: We got a boom!

Teresa: In the 1950's, champagne was again associated with luxury and celebration.

Travis: I bet there was a— I bet there was a big push. 'Cause, like, US soldiers— I mean, probably soldiers of every nationality— came back from France and, like, told stories about, like, experiences they had in France and things they saw in France, and people were like, "Huh!"

Teresa: Hmm!

Travis: "French— French stuff sounds cool." Right?

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: I bet that was that.

Teresa: So, sales quadrupled.

Travis: Wow!

Teresa: People wanted bottles for weddings, and birthdays, and graduations, and anniversaries. And basically the— it wasn't a special celebration without Dom Perignon, let's say.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Right? Um, that doesn't quite continue today. The sales haven't seen the kind of, like, boom and rise, because people are now savvy to the fact that sparkling wine can come from anywhere.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: So why pay champagne prices? [laughs quietly]

Travis: Well, this is the thing, right? Of we've reached a point in just botany and agriculture where we are able to control growing circumstances a lot more, so

you're not just trapped by, "Well, we can't grow that here," or "That only grows there," right? Because we have, like, greenhouses, and we have, you know, grow lights, and we have climate control. And so this idea of... listen. If you're listening to this in France, I like champagne. I do.

Teresa: Champagne with a capital C...

Travis: Right. I enjoy— yeah. I have no problem with it whatsoever. But it is not, to me... there are— there are— I think what it is, is there are things that become luxury-inherent, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Where... I was talking with someone about this the other day, right? These things where, to me, they are special because they cost more, right? Because of the inherent, like, that thing is fancy. Not because it tastes better, or is better, or whatever. Right? Where it's just like, when you are celebrating something, when something is a special occasion, there is a perception to this thing that makes it seem more special. And not because— I don't think anybody's like, "Hmm. You know what I could really go for right now? You know what would really hit the spot? That \$500 bottle of champagne." Right?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Like, I don't think that's something you do 'cause you're thirsty.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: Right? Or 'cause you had a hard day at work, right?

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: It's, like, the thing that's like, this is associated with, "Oh, how spe— ooh! Should we splurge?" Like, "Well, we'll— we'll all split it." Right? That kind of thing.

Teresa: Yeah. Um—

Travis: Which isn't great for sales, right? Because of that thing of, like, no one's like, "Oh, it's been a hard week at work. Yes, I'll take the \$40 glass of champagne." Right? Like, no.

Teresa: Yeah. Have you heard about the champagne coupe, right?

Travis: I have!

Teresa: Uh, the bowl.

Travis: And I would love to talk to you about it, right after this thank you note for our sponsors.

[theme music plays]

Travis: I want to tell you about Storyworth.

Teresa: Me?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Tell me!

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Tell me a story.

Travis: Well, okay. Here we go. So, this holiday season, you should give someone... something.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Travis: Period. No.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Wait. No. Give them a gift that makes them feel special and unique with Storyworth. So, Storyworth is an online service that helps you and your loved ones preserve precious memories and stories for years to come. Now, this is a thing that I have been thinking about a lot lately. We have two kids who are wildly adorable, and precious, and wonderful, and—

Teresa: And growing every day.

Travis: What?! And, um, recently my dad, through a whole thing, had some photo albums ruined, right? And I have been thinking a lot about, like, we have all these different means to, like, preserve memories and to preserve these, like, physical, you know, like, memories, like photos and letters and stuff like that. Are we doing enough? Like, are we capitalizing on these methods?

So, every week, Storyworth emails your relative or friend a thought-provoking question of your choice from the vast pool of possible options. Prompts like, what's the bravest thing you've ever done in your life? If you could see into the future, what would you want to find out? Right?

Things like this that are going to help you capture that moment in time, not just in photo form but, like, who you are, what you're thinking, what you're feeling in that moment. And after one year, Storyworth will compile all your loved one's stories, including photos, into a beautiful keepsake book that you'll be able to share and revisit for generations to come.

Teresa: It's almost like somebody holding your hand through writing a journal.

Travis: Right! Because imagine, like, there are moments where if someone asked me right then, like—

Teresa: Not only a journal. [gasps] A memoir.

Travis: A memoir. If somebody said, like, "What's the cutest thing Bebe did today?" I can tell you.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: But in ten years if someone's like, "What's the cutest thing Bebe did on that day?" I might not remember, right? And so that's why I think that this is an amazing option. And if you think it's an amazing option, which clearly you do, with Storyworth, you're giving those you love a most thoughtful, personal gift, from the heart, and preserving their memories and stories for years to come. So, go to storyworth.com/shmanners and save \$10 on your first purchase. That's storyworth.com/shmanners to save \$10 on your first purchase.

[music plays]

Danielle: This week on *Tights and Fights*, Austin Creed, better known as WWE Superstar Xavier Woods, on balancing his many passions.

Austin: This dude actually wants these ridiculous things. He wants to wear a crown. He wants to be at G4. He wants to have a yacht rock band. Like, he wants to DJ at a festival one day.

Danielle: WWE and G4's Austin Creed on *Tights and Fights*. Find it on Maximum Fun, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[music and ad end]

Travis: Okay. So, you were going to tell me about the glass, right?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Because there— there's the flute.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And the coupe.

Teresa: Right. The coupe was a favorite of the French. Uh—

Travis: So that's, like, the bowl-shaped one with the stem, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: The flute is the—

Teresa: The very long one.

Travis: —one that's, like, tubular, yes.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Totally tubular.

Teresa: It was a favorite of the French, and particularly Marie Antoinette.

Travis: Now, I've heard... I've heard a myth, a rumor, a legend...

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: ... that it was based off of the shape of her breast.

Teresa: Indeed.

[pause]

Travis: Is that true?

Teresa: No. [laughs] It's not.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: So, here it is. Okay. Uh, Marie was born in 1775.

Travis: One year before America was born!

Teresa: And the glass was invented at least half a century before that.

Travis: How did they know what her breast was gonna look like that far ahead of time?!

Teresa: They didn't.

Travis: There must've been some, like, psychics there or something!

Teresa: So...

Travis: "Someday there will be a woman, and it will look like this."

Teresa: It is— it— the thing about Marie Antoinette came up because... Marie Antoinette was, like, an icon of the time, right?

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Teresa: But the idea of these cups, there were ancient Greek drinking vessels called Mastos cups.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Mastos, or mammo, right?

Travis: Ohhh, okay.

Teresa: The Greek word for breast. You know, like mammogram, or mastectomy, and things like that.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Um, and it really does... look...

Travis: Sure, yeah.

Teresa: ... like...

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... a breast.

Travis: Nipple and everything.

Teresa: Indeed. Uh, they were used for everything from fertility rituals to, you know, every day, really. And it is based on someone's breast, just not Marie's.

Travis: So that is a thing, but it's not that.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: But from what we've talked about with Marie Antoinette and, like, that whole court, they were very good at self-publicity too, right? Like, having these weird, wild parties. Marie Antoinette did this thing that I love very much where she would, like, have a tea party, but the tea party was set up in the middle of, like, a miniature farm.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And they would, like, dress in the fancy version of, like, farm clothes and, like, just be surrounded by, like, sheep and cows and stuff.

Teresa: And it had a lot, also, to do with the press. The French press was very cruel to Marie Antoinette—

Travis: Yeah, you put coffee in it and you push it down. Eh?

Teresa: Because, you know, the idea— it was like a love to hate her, right, thing.

Travis: Oh yeah, oh yeah, yeah, yeah. She was a, uh, a tabloid star before tabloids were a thing, because it was— she represented the, like, opulence of the royal class of the bourgeoisie.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Where it was like, the opu— the amount of money that they would spend on, like, one meal and then throw everything away, and the destruction of it and everything, like, she— was it Louis the XVI? Yeah? I think. Whatever her Louis was came to represent everything that was wrong with the rich.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Yeah. Um, okay. So...

Travis: There's a lot of Louis's in there, you guys. Come on, change it up!

Teresa: There are so many Louis's. Let's talk a little bit—

Travis: Make one a Bluey.

Teresa: —about the flute versus the coupe. Now, to be clear...

Travis: Oh, yes. They're both made of glass.

Teresa: Champagne cocktails look fabulous in those beautiful cups, the coupes.

Travis: But here's the problem with them. Champagne is served cold.

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: And when you hold the cup in your hand, you're going to warm the drink. That's why the flute, you hold it at the base, right? And then your hand isn't on— or your hand is at the base, and you're not heating the entire drink.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: So it's for champagne cocktails is the best use of it.

Teresa: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Travis: Um... oh, and really, a lot of cocktails look really good in it.

Teresa: They do. They look beautiful.

Travis: More and more— more and more I see a lot of whiskey cocktails being served in them as well, but...

Teresa: Lovely.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, and the bubbles, right? So the thing about the champagne flute is with that long stem that actually is hollowed, there should be quite a lot of champagne down the stem, because what you want is that beautiful trail of tiny bubbles going all the way from the bottom to the top.

Travis: And you can drop raisins in there, and then the raisins kind of float— no. Don't do that. Do that in ginger ale if you wanna do it. Don't do it in champagne.

Teresa: [laughs] You can put a small, um, like... I have seen a current...

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... in the bottom, which can help with the nucleation sites, right? To create those bubbles, to get that trail going.

Travis: I've seen people do that before when it's like, "Oh, this bubbly is kind of flat."

Teresa: Exactly, right. Because half of the taste is in the effervescence, right?

Travis: Oooh!

Teresa: That's what makes it special. So when you serve just regular, like, just champagne by itself, sparkling wine, in the bowl of the coupe...

Travis: It releases too quickly.

Teresa: No. Actually—

Travis: Oh, it doesn't— it doesn't release?

Teresa: —it doesn't release.

Travis: Ohh!

Teresa: So, uh, you get a kind of, like, burst in your mouth of the large bubbles, but you don't get that even coating of the tiny effervescent bubbles.

Travis: Now, here's what I will say, and this sounds like I'm making a joke, but if you ever decide, like, "You know what I wanna do? I've seen it in *Great Gatsby* or whatever. I'm gonna stack up the champagne and pour from the top." Use coupes for that.

Teresa: [laughs] Yes.

Travis: They are wider, easier to stack.

Teresa: Easier stackable.

Travis: Don't do that with flutes. [laughs quietly] You're going to be very sad! Also, let me just throw out—

Teresa: Oh, okay. [laughs quietly]

Travis: —um, polycarbonate, the unbreakable, that's a good way to go.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Bebe likes to have what she calls kid wine, because Teresa and I enjoy sparkling, so we've gotten her, like, you know, the sparkling cider.

Teresa: The Welch's or whatever.

Travis: Yeah, sparkling, you know, grape juice and stuff, and she wants to have glasses like we have, so we got a bunch of these, like, you know, the unbreakable polycarbonate stuff. And then I was like, "Oh, this is great, 'cause I'm a big old Shrek, and I break stuff all the time."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: "I'm going to use these, too." I like them. 'Cause they don't break even when you accidentally karate chop them.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. So... um, let's do a couple more just basic etiquette things.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, the champagne bucket, right? The chilling bucket that you often see next to the table. You should not fill it halfway, right? Because it looks nice to see the bottle poking out of the bucket, but that's not good for the wine. Um, it creates an uneven taste in the chilling of the wine. Um, because you are going to taste the sweeter— you are going to taste a lot more sweet in wine that is, uh, closer to room temperature, right? The colder that it is, the drier it tastes, and the less sweet it'll taste.

Travis: Now, speaking of that, do you have in there talking about the different forms? The extra dry, the brut, the dry?

Teresa: No.

Travis: Okay, but I'm gonna see if I can pull it up real quick!

Teresa: Oh boy. Um—

Travis: Travis googles.

Teresa: So, uh, you want to make sure that the— that the bottle of champagne is not, quote, "fully submerged," but, you know, up to the neck for sure. Um, you can even add water to the bucket to make it easier for you to dig that bottle down. Um, don't put two in there at once. They're not meant for two. It'll just make it unevenly chilled again. If you have a couple of bottles, you know, leave one in the fridge for a little bit, but you should never serve champagne icy, either. Um, if you've ever had those tiny little ice flakes in your drink, it's fun for about two seconds, and then you're like, "I don't wanna chew my drink."

Travis: Okay, so, here it is. Are you ready? It's very confusing. Because if you see something labeled "extra dry," extra dry champagnes are only fairly dry, and have some residual sugar, right? So they're sweeter. Brut, B-R-U-T, is the driest.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Not extra dry, right? Which means it's the least sweet, right? And then if you see extra sec, it's a French term that also means extra dry. Um, demi sec is half dry, which is like a sweet sparkling wine, right?

Teresa: Right.

Travis: So extra dry is less dry than brut.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Also, as long as we're talking about chilling the champagne—

Travis: [shudders dramatically]

Teresa: [shudders dramatically]

Travis: That's so scary!

Teresa: Champagne— you should not chill your glasses beforehand. I know with some champagne cocktails it looks really cool, right? But again, it affects the taste, and the only thing that should be served in a frosted glass, as far as I'm concerned, is a root beer.

Travis: And... and a martini. But I also want to talk about— so we're talking about cocktails a lot, right?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: I want to touch on mimosas for a second, 'cause we got a question about this that I really wanted to address. That question comes from Jello, who asks:

"How many bottles of champagne does one realistically need for bottomless mimosas if you're hosting?"

Listen. Mimosas are great. Especially these days, people get creative. All kinds of juice in there. You do not need to break the bank!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: When buying sparkling wine— buy sparkling wine and not champagne— for mimosas. Right? Like—

Teresa: Because the juice is— basically what you're doing is adding alcohol and bubbles to your juice.

Travis: The juice is the forward flavor, right? You're adding that flavor to it. And so it's— I have had many, many mimosas in my life. I have never once enjoyed one more than the other depending on how much money was spent on it.

Teresa: Indeed.

Travis: Right? Um, also, if you are doing, like, a b— if you're having friends over and part of it is like— or you're hosting, and part of it is like, this is brunch, we're doing mimosas, get bigger bottles.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Right? Because, like, champagne and sparkling wine, wine in general comes in different sized bottles. Get a larger bottle and use it up instead of a bunch of small bottles. It'll cost more if you get a bunch of small bottles. Save money by just getting bigger bottles and using them up.

Teresa: Oh, another thing for mimosas is I've also heard that you should fill the glass with juice, and then top it with the champagne. Uh, because—

Travis: Well, if you wanna be a square!

Teresa: Because if you put the champagne in first, you'll release all the gas—

Travis: Oh, sure.

Teresa: —when you pour the juice on top.

Travis: And also, if you're doing bottomless mimosas... [sighs] don't go wild at the beginning, right? Have a nice, even day throughout, and eat lots of eggs... and bread.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Okay. Um, Michael asks:

"What's the deal with Prosecco versus Champagne and why does it make my Italian friends so wrathful?"

Well, Prosecco originated in Italy and Champagne originated in Champagne, France. And so it's just different—

Teresa: Yeah. They're both sparkling wines. They have different flavor profiles, for sure.

Travis: Yeah. I actually... I prefer Prosecco.

Teresa: That's okay. You're allowed.

Travis: Thank you. Um, so Emily asks:

"How do you hold the glass?"

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Um, so... as much— as little as you can, is the answer.

Teresa: [laughs] Is the answer. I would not recommend placing the, um— the bottom of the glass on your open palm. Don't do that. That's a great way to spill

a [laughs] a glass of wine. Um, but two or three fingers at the— at, you know, where you feel comfortable in the stem.

Travis: Right. And if you see— I always try to do it where the, uh, bottom of the glass part starts to turn into stem, right? That's where I feel the most control. But if you ever watch any, like, period things, a champagne flute is very much a gesturing glass, right? People move it around as they, like, move their hand, right? It's— it's almost an accessory, at times, um, as opposed to, like, if you're gesturing with a glass of whiskey in a movie, you look drunk.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, let's see. Um... so, uh, Theeniebean asks:

"Are there specific situations that call for specific kinds of champagne, brut versus extra dry, et cetera, just like people pair reds and whites with specific stuff? Seems like different [unintelligible] of champagne have various purposes."

I mean, I would say that in the pairing, when you're talking about, like, a sweeter goes with more of a after dinner, dessert. I mean, it's—

Teresa: Certainly. I would say the rules of wine apply. If you're— a dessert wine, if that is the time that you are serving the sparkling, you want— you want it to be sweeter. Uh, if it is for, you know, an— a before-dinner cocktail, I would say stay away from the super sweet, go for a very dry champagne.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Uh, just because it kind of, like, wets the mouth a little more for your food.

Travis: Yeah. I mean, this is just my gut, and if there's any sommeliers listening, please tweet at us @shmannerscast and let me know if I'm wrong. I won't address it, but it'll be nice to know that I'm wrong.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, I would say brut—

Teresa: Will it, though?

Travis: Brut before dinner, extra dry during dinner, and sweeter after dinner. That's my gut. If you're gonna do it.

Teresa: Alright.

Travis: Man, once— we've talked about this show a lot on this show, but *Supersizers Go* um, is great if you can find it, with Sue Perkins and Giles Coren where they, like, live— or they, like, dress and eat and exercise and act of the time period that they are, like, living in for a week. And man, there's, like, a time period— I think it's during, like, World War II. But, like, they will list meals where it's just like, "Second course: champagne and the rest. Third course: champagne and the rest. Fourth course: champagne and the rest."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And it was, like, a during-dinner drink. Um, let's see. Who else...

Teresa: It was probably not during World War II.

Travis: Well, that was for—

Teresa: I think it was the 20's.

Travis: —that was for— that's when he goes down and he eats, like, uh, uh, Winston Churchill. And in the bunker it was like, yeah, but Winston Churchill was having champagne. Yeah.

Teresa: Ohh, okay. They did drink a lot in the 20's episode, though.

Travis: Yes. Uh, let's see. One more. Haven asks:

"When do you buy champagne instead of wine? I know wine is good for parties and the like, but isn't champagne just as good? I don't get when to use one over the other."

If you're talking about, like, red and whites versus sparkling instead of, like, sparkling versus champagne, 'cause I don't think— you can do it whenever. Uh, but I think... [sighs] this is when it comes down to a lot of wine is based on personal taste, right?

Teresa: Absolutely.

Travis: And so I would say... I think, if you're having a party, sparkling is more fun, right? I think it... I am effervescent, and I want my drink to be effervescent.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: 'Cause I want my party to be effervescent, and I want my apple seltzer to be effervescent.

Teresa: I think— okay. What I'm saying—

Travis: Yes?

Teresa: I— I would like to make an addendum. If you are having a stand up, mill around party, I think champagne, sparkling wine is great.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: If you're having a sit down to dinner party, you want reds and whites to go with whatever meal.

Travis: Yes, I agree. Yes, I agree. Cocktail party? Champagne. Dinner party... still. Is that— I don't think people call it still wine.

Teresa: [laughs] Still wine. [through laughter] I don't think that they—

Travis: No, but I could—

Teresa: Tap wine. [laughs]

Travis: Tap wine.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I couldn't think of a different way to say it. Flat.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I'll take a nice, flat wine, please. That can't be it.

Teresa: That can't be it. I think it's just wine.

Travis: But I don't wanna— sparkling and *wine*.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Sparkling and *not* sparkling. That can't be right.

Teresa: [through laughter] I don't know.

Travis: I'm gonna stick— I'm gonna stick with still.

Teresa: Okay. Sommeliers, please tweet at us. [laughs]

Travis: No, don't tweet at me about that one, actually.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I just wanna live in my wrongness, because I want to—

Teresa: How is that any different from normal?

Travis: That's fair. I wanna be at a restaurant and be like, "Do you have any still whites?" And just see what—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "Now, this red. Is it flat?"

Teresa: [laughs] You can go and do that without me, thanks.

Travis: No, I'm gonna do it in front of you.

Teresa: [clears throat]

Travis: I'm gonna have Bebe ask it for me. "Bebe. Bebe, say the thing."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Alright, everybody. Thank you so much for joining us. Uh, this has been—

Teresa: [laughs and coughs]

Travis: —a super fun episode. Thank you, Alex, for helping with the research. We would not be able to do this without you. Thank you, Rachel, for editing the episode. We would not be able to do this without you. And thank you for you, for— for y— listening for you.

Teresa: [laughs] Oh no.

Travis: For... you. Uh, wanted to let everybody know, because of the holidays and stuff, we won't have an episode next week, but I don't know, make up your own *Shmanners* episode and record it for your friends. What a fun holiday tradition. Um, speaking—

Teresa: Also a fun holiday tradition! Go and donate to Harmony House by watching Candlesnights.

Travis: It was so fun. I had a great time. Can I say, I— after we recorded our segment, I then instantly forgot what we said and did in it.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: So then rewatching it—

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: —was so funny to me.

Teresa: So fun.

Travis: 'Cause it was like, wow! We said some funny stuff. Uh, so you can check that out. [Bit.ly/candlesnights2021](https://bit.ly/candlesnights2021). Tickets are just five dollars, and those proceeds go to Harmony House. Uh, it's a shelter in Huntington helping people who are experiencing homelessness. Uh, you can go check out all the stuff at mcelroy.family if you wanna see all the other McElroy projects. You can go to mcelroymerch.com for all of the McElroy merch, dot com.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, also— and we say this just about every season, uh, holiday season, but be careful out there. Um, you know, we talked a lot about champagne and alcohol and stuff in this episode. Don't drink and drive. Don't get in a car with anybody who's been drinking. Um, if you're on the roads, be safe. Uh, if it's snowy and stuff where you are, be extra safe. Um, you know, we— we're heading towards the new year here, and we want to see the new year with you, so please be careful and make good choices, from us, your *Shmanners* hosts slash... I don't know...

Teresa: Mom and dad.

Travis: Mom and dad.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um, what else, Teresa? What else do we say?

Teresa: Well, we always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art, @shmannerstcast is where we get all of these excellent questions. Um, and like you said, please tag us and tweet at us and, you know, let us know you're out there. It's great.

Um, also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for our fan-run Facebook group *Shmanners* Fanners's cover photo. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, you should join that group today! *Shmanners* Fanners. And if you have topic suggestions, if you have idiom submissions, if you want to say hello to Alex, you should email us. *Shmannerstcast@gmail.com*.

Travis: I wish you all could see the focused look on Teresa's face as she recounts all that. She's staring in the distance, and there was one moment in there where there was a tiny flub, 'cause I was looking at her so intensely—

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: —that she made eye contact with me and lost her place for a second.
[laughs]

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Whoops! Hey. That's gonna do it for us. Join us again next year!

Teresa: Ooh, no RSVP required!

Travis: You've been listening to *Shmanners*...

Teresa: Manners, *Shmanners*. Get it?

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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[lion roar]

[music and ad end]