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THE HOTEL

Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, Champillon, France

IF YOU'RE PLANNING ON VISITING THE
BIRTHPLACE OF BUBBLES, YOU MIGHT
AS WELL DO IT PROPERLY

Words: Hannah Lemon



“Too much of anything is bad, but too much champagne is just right.” Had F. Scott Fitzgerald ever driven through France’s Champagne region, he could have pretty much hooked himself to a constant IV drip of the stuff. Here, you can spittoon, swirl and sniff your way around the undulating landscape sampling sparkling wine after sparkling wine.

As you wind through Reims (always so problematic to pronounce as an English speaker – safe to say, it’s not “reems”), your car will swoosh past the estates of Veuve Clicquot, Taittinger, Ruinart and Lanson. Coming from the other way, via Épernay, there’s Bollinger, Moët & Chandon and Billecart-Salmon.

While wine-infused decadence fills each day, stay in the Champagne region and the evenings can often fall short. It’s hard to believe but there’s a real dirge of luxury hotels in this area. Why would you finish an afternoon sipping premier cru, only to kick back in a Novotel at the end of the day?

That was until 2018, when the five-star Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa opened. Set in Champillon, just north of Épernay (quite literally nestled in the vines), it’s in a prime location to continue what you started: drinking champagne. Not only does the hotel provide exclusive access to local champagne houses, but it also offers a personal selection of bottles in-house.

This wine-country retreat is a renovated ancient Relais de Poste (coaching inn) where riders used to make a stopover before re-joining the road. Instead of mead and soup, there’s now a spa, a Michelin-starred restaurant, and 47 luxurious rooms. For serious royal treatment, you can go big with a private jet experience. The hotel has partnered with private jet Charter GlobeAir to take you from Paris straight

to the hotel, for a two-night stay with all the frills included – wine tastings, spa experience, dinner in the restaurant – and then whizz you back again.

Whether you’re visiting by plane, train or car, the Michelin-starred restaurant Le Royal is a must. It’s headed up by chef Jean-Denis Rieubland, who has placed a lot of emphasis on local produce. Vegetables are grown by the staff, meat is delivered by nearby farmers, and honey is harvested on the grounds. From duck foie gras half-cooked with figs, and grilled scallops with cauliflower mousseline, to Aubrac beef fillet, and mango perfumed with Tahitian vanilla, the pairings of ingredients are phenomenal. Of course, the experience wouldn’t be complete without the sommelier matching wines, or more often than not champagnes, to each course.

After, you can retire to a suite that is designed as a haven of relaxation. The views out onto the surrounding wineries, along with the pampering Hermès products, will have you de-stressed and snoozing in no time.

We should probably also mention the spa, which covers an area of 16,000sq ft, almost the size of a quarter of a football pitch. Working in partnership with cult brands Biologique Recherche and Kos Paris, there are nine treatment rooms where you can indulge in custom-made facials and intensive-wrap treatments. Afterwards, kick back in the eucalyptus-infused sauna, lie down in the tiled hammam, have a swim in the indoor and outdoor pools, and rehydrate with a fresh juice cleanse.

Want to make the most of the next day’s morning? Then flex to a sunrise yoga session in the hotel’s wood-lined studio. It will set you up perfectly for a that glass of champagne with breakfast...

From €406 per night (currently approx. £342), royalchampagne.com