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# Champagne Baby: How One Parisian Learned to Love Wine--and Life--the American Way

*Laure Dugas*

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**Champagne Baby: How One Parisian Learned to Love Wine--and Life--the American Way** Laure Dugas
**Fresh, charming, and wholly irresistible, *Champagne Baby* turns a familiar tale on its head: Instead of yet another American seeking the French secret to good living, a Frenchwoman finds her purpose—much to her surprise—in America.**

Laure Dugas is a champagne baby, born into a family of winemakers from two storied regions of France: Champagne and the Rhône Valley. When Laure was an infant, her mother would dip a finger in wine and dab it on Laure's lips to acclimate her to the taste and aroma. But Laure wants little to do with the family business. It is only at age twenty-three, when her uncle offers to send her to New York City to learn English and represent his wines to the American market, that Laure bids adieu to her boyfriend and begins her journey of discovery.

The job, it turns out, is both harder and easier than expected. Laure must speak in a new language about a subject in which she has no expertise. But an experienced wine saleswoman shares the secret for faking it: "Always. Be. French." After all, who could claim to know more about wine than a Frenchwoman? With the pedigree of an expert, even as she feels like a fraud, Laure dives into an industry still dominated by men, winning over restaurateurs and sommeliers, diligently developing her palate, and traveling across the vast country that is her new home.

For the first time, Laure is able to distinguish among the famous wines of her native land. She learns to greet a wine by the nose and judge a bottle not by its industry rating but by the balance of its flavors. Overcoming homesickness, culture shock, and the trials of a long-distance relationship, Laure manages to settle into her new milieu, her wine-glass-half-full attitude turning an eight-month stint into a three-year adventure.

Part coming-of-age memoir, part travelogue, sprinkled throughout with regional maps and wine recommendations, *Champagne Baby* imparts the critical lessons that pair with both wine and life: You're Better Than the Cheapest Bottle, There's Always Occasion for Champagne, and Trust Your Palate. It encourages readers to view themselves and their surroundings with newfound appreciation, and to raise their glasses with open-mindedness and joy.

**Praise for *Champagne Baby***

"A coming-of-age story of a French girl in love with America, *Champagne Baby* is a compulsive read filled with keen observations and sharp descriptions of place and culture—a modern, exuberant tale of two cities and discovery."**—Mireille Guiliano, author of *French Women Don't Get Fat***

"It is nearly impossible to read Dugas's charming, heartfelt memoir and not feel a little effervescent. *Champagne Baby* is a tender coming-of-age story set in an oenophile's playground. Her Franco-American spirit—marked with new traditions like champagne on Thanksgiving—combines the best of the Old and New worlds. *Champagne Baby* is, like the best bottle of wine, fun and complex, sensual and smart, and totally satisfying."**—Hannah Howard, columnist, "Scoop du Jour"**

“An enticing story that evolves and ventures into unexpected directions and nourishes a result that Dugas had never imagined.”**—Richard Vine, PhD, author of *The Curious World of Wine***

“[A] delightful memoir . . . [Dugas] entertainingly reflects on what she learned about herself, her family’s wine business, and wines in general while living in the U.S.”***—Kirkus Reviews***

“This insightful memoir has the capacity to inspire and charm the novice wine drinker while also reinforcing and reminding the well-seasoned palate of the romance, the seduction of wine.”***—Booklist***

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