

«Hillsides Houses and Cellars of Champagne» classified UNESCO's World Heritage

The decision is historic !

It is in Bonn on 4 July that the 21 representatives of the States parties to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention voted unanimously the registration of **"Hillsides, Houses and Cellars of Champagne"** on the world heritage list in the **Living Cultural landscapes** category. The members of the Committee acknowledged their **Exceptional Universal Value** and deemed that the **protection and management conditions for the proposed property had been fulfilled**.

The "Champagne Hillsides, Houses and Cellars" are not a standard vineyard landscape ! Through the way that the landscape sites are organized and through the work done by men and women, it reflects as early as the 18th century the rise of an innovative wine production of an elaboration process and of a selling method which is still in use today and that has left its mark on the region and its rural and urban landscapes, and has given rise to a world renowned wine, a symbol of celebration and joy. A unique set of landscapes and sites, carrying a history, a culture and a know-how. This is what gives the "Hillsides, Houses and Cellars" their Exceptional Universal Value.



Pierre Cheval President of the 'Association "landscapes of Champagne" has been its mainstay spending eight years putting together and managing brilliantly the area's application. Upon the announcement of the long-awaited verdict, Pierre Cheval wished to express his joy and that of the entire Champagne region :

"A feeling of great satisfaction and collective delight ! My thoughts immediately turn to all those who worked on the application, all the partners who supported this slightly crazy undertaking, and the local people whose area has just received worldwide recognition. Inclusion on the list is a form of recognition but also an undertaking to the world's nations, so we must ensure that we are worthy of it. We are duty-bound to preserve and maintain this landscape, know-how and heritage so that we can pass them on unspoilt to future generations. We have a date with history, our very own history!"

With this inscription on the list of world heritage of UNESCO, it is not only the outstanding universal value of the champagne wine cultural landscape that gave birth to Champagne wine, which is today recognized but also and more widely all the work done to produce, make and publicize champagne wine that has been passed down to generations and preserved in the 320 AOC champagne districts located in the five French departments of Marne, Aube, Aisne, Haute-Marne and Seine-et-Marne.

Champagne is now part of some of the most iconic sites in the world.

Source / Association Paysages de Champagne

Photos / Michel Jolyot