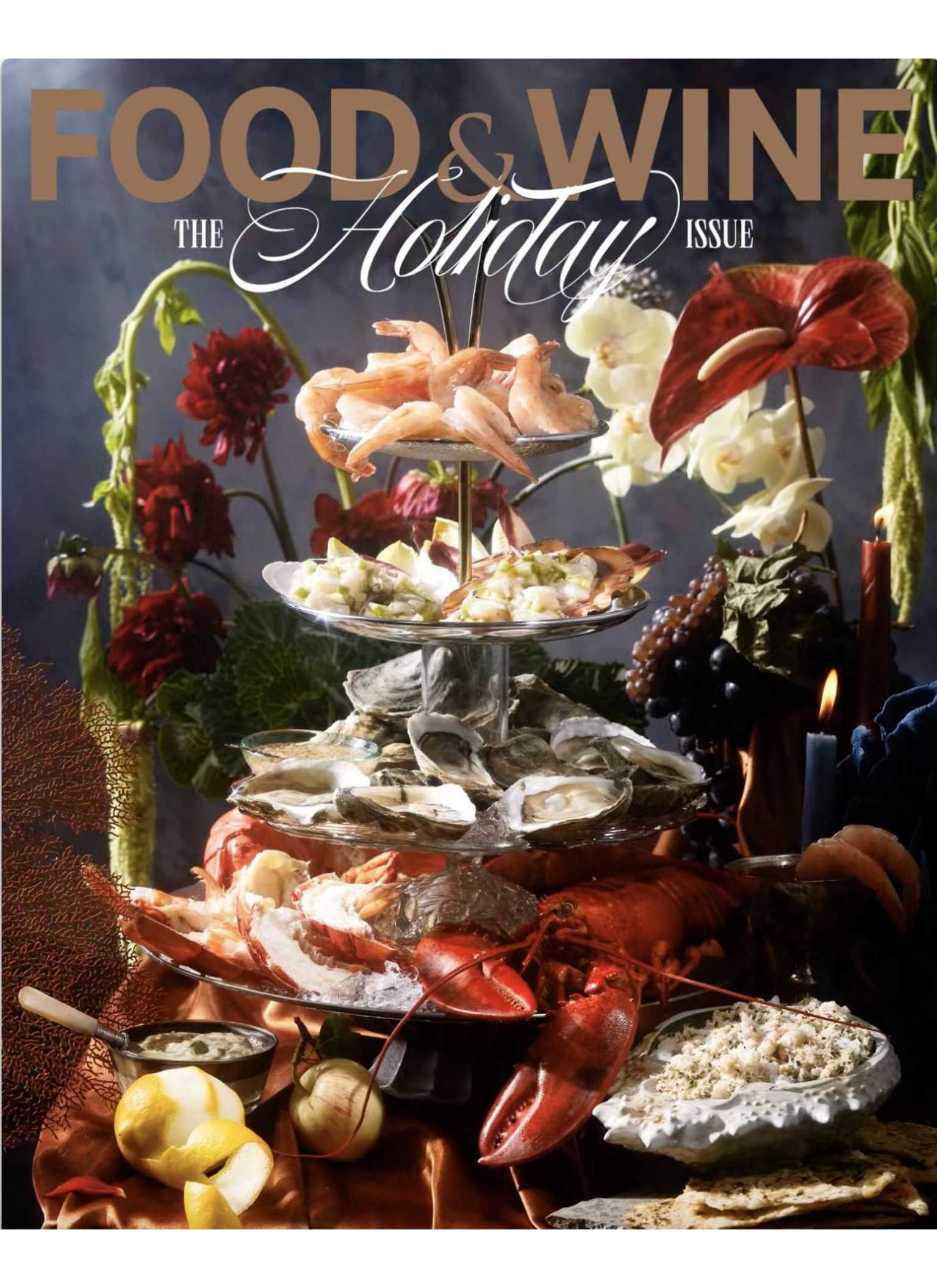


# FOOD & WINE

THE

*Holiday*

ISSUE



# Bring On the Bubbles

Great sparkling wines to celebrate with

**O**NCE UPON A TIME, buying sparkling wine for the holidays was simple: There was Champagne. (OK, there was also André Cold Duck, but let's not go there. I'm still not even sure what it is.) But these days, there are excellent sparkling wines being made all over the globe, or at least the parts of the globe where you can grow grapes for wine—I'm waiting for that bottle of Antarctic sparkling ice wine, but even with global warming, I'm not holding my breath for it.

Even so, Champagne is still the king, both in terms of price and reputation (and, the Champenois would argue, quality). At the very top levels, I have to agree. The greatest Champagnes are still the greatest sparkling wines in the world (and priced accordingly). But in the midrange, you can now find wines like Franciacortas from Italy, top Cavas from Spain, and wonderful California sparkling wines that rival Champagnes for quality and are often less expensive, too. Then, at the affordable level, there are excellent buys from everywhere: Italian Proseccos, basic Cavas from Spain, and sparkling wines from South Africa, the Loire Valley, Tasmania, and dozens of other places. It's a bounty of bubbles out there. Go forth, buy, and share.



## *Time to Splurge*

### **2014 CHAMPAGNE BOLLINGER LA GRANDE ANNÉE BRUT (\$190)**

Bollinger's La Grande Année has long been a benchmark in vintage Champagne, and the 2014 vintage is no exception. This golden-hued wine is racy and zesty up front, but the long aging it receives adds textural depth, giving it a richness that lasts and lasts.