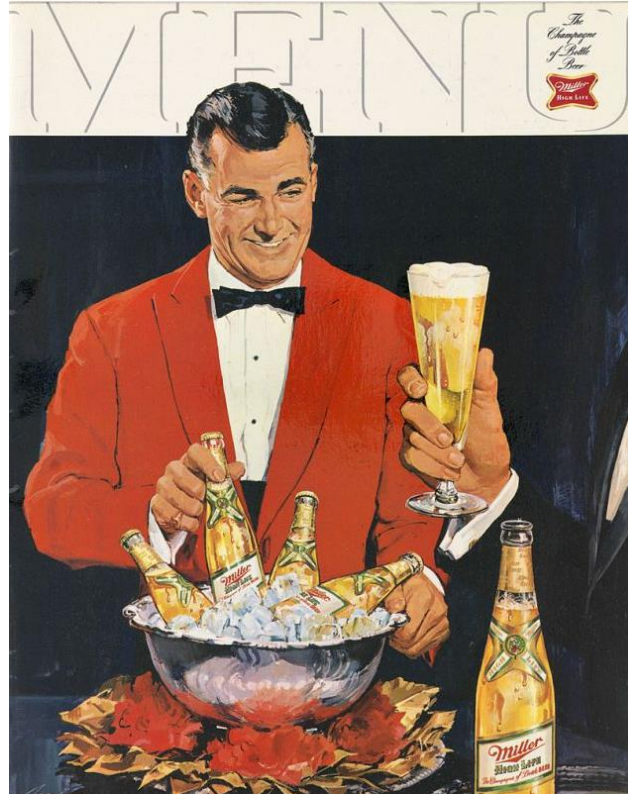




What's the real Champagne of beers?

Ain't High Life



I'm sure the world's full of fancy rich people who intend to drink real Champagne all night on New Year's Eve, and I'm just as sure that you're not one of them. No offense, but there are Champagne-all-night folk and there are folk who read (and write for) commuter newspapers the week between Christmas and New Year's, and there's not a ton of overlap.

We're able to have this chat right now because you're not off on your private Champagne island, which is cruel and unfair, but I have great news: Good Champagne might be cost prohibitive for slobs like us, but most of the world's best beers cost less than a bottle of Olive Garden's house Prosecco.

So this year, consider skipping the low-end sparklers in favor of these top-notch beers.

Brooklyn Local One: This fruity, spicy and festive Belgian pale ale is partially fermented with Champagne yeast. Local One also has a peppery, saison-like character that makes it a versatile match for a variety of swanky party foods such as oysters, caviar and [Three Cheese Bagel Bites](#).

Boulevard Saison-Brett: This lively, effervescent ale is similar to Brooklyn Local One, with an extra funky edge from the addition of *Brettanomyces*, a wild yeast strain that lends an earthy, slightly tart character.



Firestone Walker Union Jack: Most reasonable New Year's resolutions boil down to simply trying to be a slightly better version of yourself, and what's better inspiration than plotting your next 12 months' worth of moves over a 6-pack of America's finest year-round, readily available India pale ale?

Cambridge Brewing Company You Enjoy My Stout: Okay, this barrel-aged Russian Imperial Stout is named after a Phish song, which is quite a bit of baggage for a beer to overcome. But once you get past that outrage, you're left with a deep, dark-roasted delight full of coffee, chocolate, fruit and leather flavors.

Miller High Life: Or maybe your wallet took a beating this year, and you've got to keep your holiday beer a little lower-falutin'. High Life has the ideal name, label and logo—literally, "the champagne of beers!"—but as for the actual beer? Not my thing, but tons of tasteful restaurant-industry people swear by it.



Narragansett Lager: Similar to High Life, except good.

Lagunitas Sucks: A hoppy but balanced multi-grain strong ale in the imperial IPA mold, Sucks has the added benefit of coming in a 32-ounce bottle, making it the world's classiest quart of beer.

Allagash Curieux: Yeah, \$20 is pretty steep for a bottle of beer, but this partially Jim Beam-barrel-aged Belgian-style tripel is a masterpiece, and you're worth it, even if just for one night.