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THE **tasting**panel

MAGAZINE

MEET THE MASTERS:

The Duke's son, Ethan Wayne; Chef Rick Moonen, whose RX Boiler Room hosted our final challenge; Chris Radomski, CEO, Duke Spirits; Fred Dame, MS, Vice President, Prestige Accounts, American Wine and Spirits; and Francesco Lafranconi, Executive Director of Mixology and Spirits Education, Southern Wine and Spirits of Nevada.

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What Dreams May Come

THE NEW JCB TASTING SALON AND ATELIER BY JCB IN YOUNTVILLE PROMISES "NO LIMIT" TO YOUR ENJOYMENT

by Jonathan Cristaldi / photos by Alexander Rubin



Jean-Charles Boisset with a glass of *The Surrealist* in hand at his JCB Tasting Salon in Yountville, CA.



James Ayers, Atelier by JCB's cheesemonger, slicing through some Beaufort, a raw cow's milk cheese. Atelier boasts a selection of cheeses and charcuterie that is unrivaled in Napa Valley.



Lalique crystal decanters on display at the JCB Tasting Salon—all for purchase.

The opening of a new tasting room in the heart of Napa Valley is often an event unto itself with a kind of pomp and circumstance that you can almost predict—the fresh-faced staff, the storied interior design, full pours, on and on. But when an opening involves the creativity and stamp of Jean-Charles Boisset—a wine-world visionary with infectious energy and a charismatic charm that seems to touch everything within his immediate presence—you can hardly predict what to expect, as is the case with the recent opening of his new haute-living **JCB Tasting Salon and Atelier by JCB**, in Yountville, California.

Situated just off Washington Street, JCB has transformed what was a lackluster tasting room into an experiment in wine world joy. Everything is fashioned in the Louis XIV style—gold-leaf gilded furniture, an exquisite central mahogany table, and looking up, you'll find yourself transfixed by a dazzling Baccarat crystal chandelier, or instead by your own reflection, glimpsed in a series of mirrors framed by elegantly carved gilt wood—JCB is unabashedly aware that they also offer a voyeuristic view of other people—an arousing and sexy kind of thread that runs through all of his creations.

Add to all this, the "Surrealist Boutique" where high retail fashion is on dazzling display—and for purchase. Baccarat and Lalique decanters and vases and Riedel "specialties" line the wall, next to wine accoutrements and artistically fascinating jewelry, flecked by Swarovski crystals and personally designed by JCB. There are Goyard handbags, Champagne buckets

and so much more. "We wanted to bring all these products into the tasting salon to instill a bit of joy," said JCB, beaming, impeccably dressed in a red velvet blazer, wearing his heart (as a pin) on his lapel—which he designed.

Samples and wine flights are available for purchase in the Tasting Salon, and guest are encouraged to sit at the interactive tasting table—it will astound. Some of the wines we sampled were only available on-premise: JCB "Infinity" sparkling (\$75), an exclusive 3,000-bottle offering, fully organic and biodynamic with zero dosage—bright mineral notes, tingly mousse, fresh green apple skin and baked apple and pear spice; the JCB 2012 No. 76 Chardonnay, Marin County (\$35), with bright fruit, a decadent mouthfeel, round and with burnt toast and caramel notes; *The Surrealist* 2013 Napa Valley (\$350), a Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot blend, sold in clear glass that can be used as a decanter afterwards. It's a robust, black cherry and plum skin wine with powerful tannins and a mineral vein that is as pronounced as JCB's personality.

James Ayers and Rebecca Karr, who can boast 25 years of experience working with fine epicurean goods, run the Atelier, accessible through an open-framed doorway. From frozen lobsters, smoked salmon, foie gras, pata negra and escargot to vinegars, olive oils, chocolates, caviar, Poilâne bread flown in from France every Thursday, and more, the options will keep you up at night—and that's okay with JCB. "I'll sleep when I'm dead," he says. "There is nothing like a dream to create our future, and we need our dreams to take us there."

JCB 2010 No. 1 Cabernet Sauvignon Seductive and feminine; a silky mouthfeel that wraps layers of concentrated dark berry fruit, black cherries, savory spice and complex oak nuances around your palate.



JCB NV No. 13 Crémant de Bourgogne Brut The color of pink sapphire, with delicate beading and a clarity of red berry fruit, savory spice and a mineral vein that threads its way through a lengthy, refreshing finish ■■