



## JCB Tasting Salon & Atelier

Review by Dave — [Leave a Comment](#)

### JCB Tasting Salon & Atelier by JCB

opened in Yountville, appropriately on Valentines Day 2016. There is no other walk-in tasting room in the Napa Valley that comes close to the diverse and visually impressive selection of interior decor. As you enter, the tasting room is an assault on your senses and you aren't sure what to feast your eyes on first. Pay attention to the details which you will certainly miss if you try to absorb this tasting room in it's entirety at once – the leopard pattern on the bar chairs, the gold leaf decorating the tables, the golden horn shoe shaped spittoons, the details of the crystal, the interesting selection of books – the list goes on and on.



This tasting room is a showcase of creativity if you will, both with the selection of wine offered and the pieces of art and decorative items for sale. It is the vision of creative mastermind, vintner Jean-Charles Boisset. Born in Burgundy he grew up surrounded by vineyards and the wine business. His parents Jean-Claude and Claudine founded their first winery in 1961 – today the family collection has grown significantly with wineries located in France, Italy, California and Quebec.

There are four JCB tasting experiences/locations within the JCB collection, at Raymond vineyards in the Napa Valley, DeLoach in neighboring Sonoma County and inside the lobby of the Ritz Carlton in San Francisco. Their Yountville location is the only one that is open to the public by walk-in.

It is refreshing to discover a tasting room where the staff are extremely well trained in both wine and the heritage of the items for sale here (not always the case with walk in tasting rooms) - but again, this is not exactly a typical walk-in tasting room.

The focus of the wine here is on the JCB Collection – this is an impressive collection of wines spanning continents. JCB does not own a winery, rather the wines are made at some of the wineries within the collection (IE in Burgundy, Napa & Sonoma). Some of the individual wines from each of the wineries are on display (including a wine made with someday music legend, John Legend called Legend Vineyard Exclusive or LVE) – these wines are not tasted here but can be purchased on site.



The JCB wines focus on 'the story behind the bottle' and the style of wines rather than specific varietals, locations and vineyard designate wines. Certainly not always the case with wines grown and produced in Napa – especially from all the small producers.



The wines are named numerically – with each number/name representing a specific story, meaning or year. Jean-Charles compares the JCB wines to that of art and music (both of which he enjoys immensely). You don't need to favor a certain genre of art or music – rather you can connect with individual pieces from a diversity of artists, styles and types of

music. Same with wine.

JCB is known for their sparkling wines – they certainly make a diversity of these (for obvious reasons it is rare to find a Napa tasting room that pours sparkling wines from outside of Napa). While the majority of wines poured on site are from Napa, several of their Burgundian wines are available for tasting including some of their delicious crémants (sparkling wine not made in Champagne but made in the méthode champenoise style).

These are a select few wines we tried during our visit:

The 2014 No. 76 Chardonnay is named 76 for two reasons that refer to 1976. This is the year that Jean-Charles was introduced to premium wines and is also the year the Paris Tasting was held (which helped highlight the quality of Napa wines Internationally). The fruit for this wine was sourced from neighboring Sonoma County – underwent full malolactic fermentation and was barrel aged. It shows a rich golden hue in the glass with noticeable spices on both the bouquet and the palate – especially noticeable on the lingering finish. Displays a pleasing creamy mouth feel along with an intensity of flavor not always seen in wines from this varietal.

The No. 3 Pinot Noir is an interesting wine – it was first made to help celebrate Jean-Charles' marriage to Gina Gallo – two wine world's coming together to create a third. As a result, this unique wine features grapes grown and then partially vinified in Burgundy – then shipped to California for the final processing and then blended with the same varietal grown in the Russian River Valley of Sonoma County.

The 2011 shows some bottle maturation – with excellent balance featuring more darker fruits and more structure than many of the more delicate Pinot Noir's we have tried that are entirely sourced from the Russian River Valley. The bouquet shows initial fruit (cherry) and earthy notes and as it opens, reveals more baking spices. This wine shows very good acidity.

The 2010 No. 1 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon was made in very limited production (only 100 cases). The nose is pretty, showing chocolate, cherries, baking spices and sweet fruit notes. This is a well balanced, lighter style Cabernet Sauvignon compared to some of the heady and weighty Cabs coming out of Napa. St. Helena sourced fruit. It is easy to drink with fine grained, noticeable tannins that linger for some time. Palate shows mostly red fruit – red currant and red cherry.

The 2010 No. 10 Cabernet Sauvignon perhaps is not 10x as big as the No 1 Cabernet Sauvignon as the numbered name might indicate, but it is a noticeably different wine altogether. The nose is appealing showing notes of chocolate and mocha along with darker fruit (black cherry and blackberry) – it has a richness and a depth of flavor that is intriguing with broad shouldered robust tannins anchoring a long finish.



A small side room, that perhaps upon first glance you might think of as an 'offspring' of the main "Red Room" at Raymond Vineyards is actually called the Surrealist Room. Here guests can enjoy a more intimate tasting over a glass top counter surrounded by a generous helping of the color red and a variety of luxury items for sale (jewelry, wine accessories etc). Reservations accepted or if available, this room is also open to walk ins.

JCB has partnered with several premiere brands to sell their products within the tasting salons. These include Gaggenau (high end home appliances, made in Germany), Baccarat (hand-crafted crystal), Bernardaud (porcelain), and Christofle (premium silver decorations).

The Atelier is located within the same building 'next door' but is accessible from the salon via a connecting door inside. Walking into this shop around lunch time is sure to spark some sort of culinary salivation. Choose from a variety of specialty items sourced from both Napa and Sonoma including caviar, meats, cheeses, mustard, specialty teas, honey (from hives at both Raymond Vineyards and DeLoach Vineyards) and other fine delicacies.

Special culinary trays, lunches, cheese and charcuterie boards, specialty sandwiches (one of the better ham sandwiches we have tried – certainly not made from a typical ham) and specialty lunches can be ordered ahead of time (a 48 hour minimum notice needed).

For more information on this unique treasure trove in the heart of Yountville, visit:  
[www.jcbwines.com/locations/jcb-tasting-salon](http://www.jcbwines.com/locations/jcb-tasting-salon)

