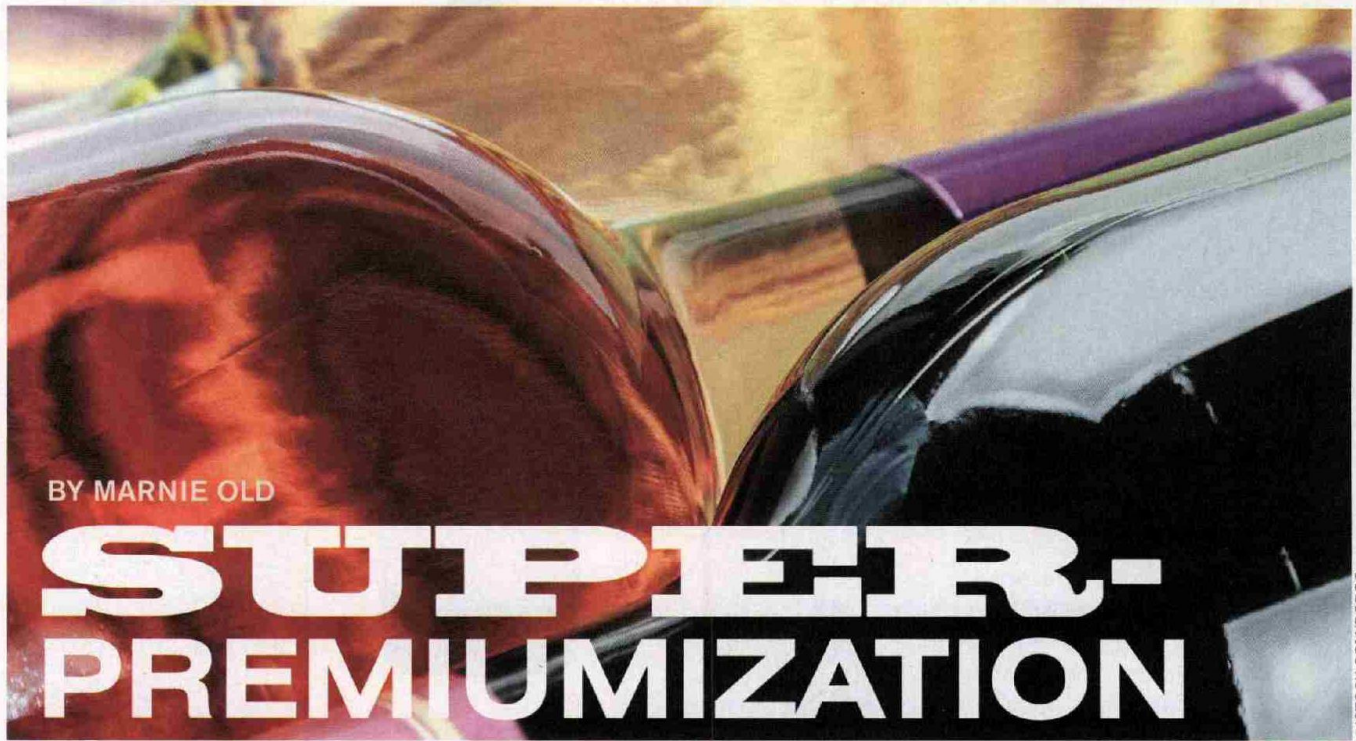


BeverageDynamics

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BY MARNIE OLD

SUPER- PREMIUMIZATION

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A Sunny Forecast for the High Teens and Twenties

ENVISIONING A DIFFERENT FUTURE FOR RETAIL

Jean Charles Boisset has already shaken up the hidebound wine business with his bold ideas, unbridled passion and inimitable style. Whether a surprise performance by John Legend at the Napa Valley Wine Auction, or dressing up the tank room at Raymond Vineyards with Baccarat crystal chandeliers and showgirl mannequins on trapezes à la Moulin Rouge, everything he does connects his wines and his customers through emotion and sensation – not discounts or point scores.

“We aim for both our French and American wines to be trendless, to serve as a workshop of romance and an atelier of pleasure,” he says.

Asked how he would advise retailers looking to trade up, he shares an untraditional view. “If we have trained our customers to shop by price, putting our wines in boxes with a number like prisoners, tight margins and a race to the bottom are the natural result – there is no magic!” Boisset says. “Look to the world of

fashion for inspiration – clothing is a lifestyle product as diversified as wine, if not more so. There will always be a place for discount warehouses, but the designers who can charge frontline prices are those who are creating beautiful dreams and welcoming their customers to join in. Wine is more than a number – it is art! Wine is a sophisticated form of liquid travel and a feast for the senses.”

Jean Charles certainly walks the walk, partnering with other luxury lifestyle brands like Goyard handbags, designing his own line of jewelry and most recently opening an opulent JCB Tasting Lounge at San Francisco’s Ritz-Carlton hotel. Boisset has

recently turned his eye to the retail experience himself, developing a luxury ‘Shop in Shop’ inspired by the prestige designer boutiques found within department stores. Like everything Jean Charles creates, it is definitely a beautiful dream - sexy, over-the-top and very ‘ooh-la-la.’ BC



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— Jean Charles Boisset