

## Boisset Collection Ramps Up Innovation Efforts With New Releases

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Known for its broad portfolio of California and French wineries, the Boisset Collection has enjoyed steady progress at the high end of the wine market lately. Last year, the group grew its U.S. volume by 4% to 875,000 cases, led by California-based DeLoach Vineyards, Raymond Vineyards, and Buena Vista Winery. This year, the Boisset Collection is unleashing a new product blitz, including a host of new wine and spirits offerings.

“Where we’re seeing the most success is in the \$30 to \$50 and above range, as well as with sparkling wines that are \$20 and up,” Boisset Collection vintner and proprietor Jean-Charles Boisset tells SND. “We’re really looking to make wine for the next generation, which means we’re focusing on more elegant, lower-alcohol styles. We’re also very bullish on California and on organic wines.”

Boisset Collection’s Buena Vista, headquartered in Sonoma, recently debuted a new rosé sparkler (\$60 a 750-ml.) and a reformulated and repackaged version of its popular red blend The Count (\$20). Raymond Vineyards—a certified organic estate with vineyards across Rutherford, St. Helena, and Jameson Canyon—has similarly expanded its stable, adding to its Velvet Label range in March with a Merlot (\$30), which joins Raymond’s original Velvet Label Cabernet Sauvignon (\$40). The winery is also building on its LVE Wines venture, adding a limited edition rosé from Provence (\$25) next month. Created in collaboration with singer-songwriter John Legend, the LVE brand also features a Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, and red blend (\$45-\$80).

Under its JCB label, the Boisset Collection recently released French Kiss (\$22), a red sparkler made with 100% Gamay from Beaujolais, while extending availability of its Passion by JCB red blend to the on-premise. Around 1,000 cases of the Cabernet Sauvignon-based Napa Valley blend are launching in the restaurant channel, positioned at around \$96 a bottle and \$26 a glass.

Earlier this spring, the company also unveiled J’Noon, a partnership with Kapil Sekhri, co-founder of Indian winery Fratelli Wines. The range, launching stateside this

summer, will feature three limited edition wines from India: JCB No. 47 Brut Akluj (\$50), a 100% Chardonnay sparkler, White Akluj (\$40), and Red Akluj (\$60).

Meanwhile, the Boisset Collection made its foray into the spirits segment this spring. The JCB Spirits range comprises three upscale vodkas—Classic, Caviar-infused, and Truffle-infused (\$125-\$150)—and a gin (\$125) made with juniper, roses, and coriander. The spirits, which are all distilled from a wine base of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay sourced from the Côte d’Or in Burgundy, are currently rolling out across 16 U.S. markets. “We’ve approached these spirits like we would an estate wine—it’s very small production, around 5,000 bottles of each label,” says Boisset, adding that each offering is designed to be enjoyed neat, but can also be paired with food.

In addition to wine and spirits, the Boisset Collection has successfully spun off its brand into several other categories, releasing a coffee range called First Growth and laying plans to launch a perfume line in June. Boisset also recently released a new book, *Passion for Wine: The French Ideal and the American Dream*.—Christina Jelski