



RAYMOND VINEYARDS CULTIVATES TRUFFLES IN NAPA VALLEY

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WINES AND WINERIES

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Fabulous Fungi...TRUFFLES

This spring, Boisset Collection's Raymond Vineyards partnered with the American Truffle Company® (ATC) to cultivate one of the world's rarest and most delectable foods: Périgord black truffles. Embracing the Old and New World traditions exemplified by Boisset's luxury wine, spirits, food, and lifestyle goods portfolio and ATC's cutting-edge truffle science, the unique partnership will produce truffles for professional chefs as well as for enjoyment at home.

What the heck are truffles?

Truffles are underground fungi that grow on the roots of certain trees (often oak or hazelnut). There are thousands of species, but the most prized black truffle is the Périgord (also known as 'black diamond/gold').

The dazzling, irresistible aroma of truffles has captivated humans for centuries. Their lore is mythical, filled with mystery and superstition. Ancient Egyptians thought truffles sprang from the ground where the gods struck lightning bolts. The Greeks and Romans believed they provided eternal health to the body and soul. In the Middle Ages, the church condemned their exotic aroma as the devil's creation. During the Renaissance, King Louis XIV brought truffles back as a culinary delicacy, making them a darling of the noble class.

Truffle farming has long been a lucrative crop in Europe and is rapidly gaining ground in other parts of the world, including North America. Like planting a vineyard, a truffle orchard takes five to six years to produce. The good news for truffle growers is that once an orchard has been established, it requires relatively little maintenance and no inorganic/toxic practices to sustain it. And a successful truffle orchard can enjoy a long and healthy lifespan—up to 60-80 years, depending on the host tree and maintenance methods.



Dogs lead the hunt for truffles

According to legend, truffles were discovered by a farmer who saw his pig digging the subterranean fungus up from the root of a tree. Truffles emit an odor similar to the sex pheromone found in male pigs, which drives the female pigs absolutely wild with desire. For years, sows were used for hunting truffles, but extracting them from their eager, vice-like mouths proved treacherous, causing many hunters to lose a digit or two. So today, dogs are used for the hunt—a far more affable and obedient alternative.

For many growers, the real fun of growing truffles begins with the harvest. Accompanied by a trusty truffle-hunting dog and spade, harvesting truffles is an exhilarating, hands-on endeavor. Almost any dog can be trained to truffle hunt, but in the burgeoning American truffle cultivation world, foraging dogs are typically hunting or herding breeds. Because these dogs are highly trained to hunt the black gold, they're worth their weight in gold.