

SFGATE

Jean-Charles Boisset opens opulent tasting lounge at the Ritz-Carlton

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Purple and leopard print set the mood at the JCB Lounge.

Leopard print carpeting, purple velvet sofas, display cases of Baccarat jewelry and Goyard handbags: This might not sound like your average joint to drink a glass of wine.

But if you know Jean-Charles Boisset, the opulence of his new JCB by Jean-Charles Boisset Tasting Lounge at the Ritz-Carlton, open since Saturday, will come as no surprise.

The shockingly lavish and darkly lit room is adjacent to the hotel's concierge desk, and it can fit only about 10 guests at a time. (Has "tiny" been rebranded as "exclusive"?) Conceived as an urban annex of the JCB lounges that Boisset operates at his wineries Raymond, DeLoach and Buena Vista, this location serves only wine flights; bottle service and by-the-glass options are currently not available. The three flights on offer are the Bubble Collection (\$50, four pours), the Chardonnay & Pinot Noir Collection (\$75, five pours) and the Ultimate JCB (\$100, five pours). This sounds pricey for small pours. Those looking to strike a bargain may pay a one-time fee of \$500 to join the JCB Collectors Wine Club, which entitles members to free flights.

The lounge itself does not serve food, but guests are welcome to order room service.



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Decorative touches at the JCB Lounge include a cloche that contains butterflies.

And there's a lot more here than just wine flights. Just in case you find yourself on a tight schedule without time to stop for both your Goyard Saint Louis tote *and* a bottle of JCB Surrealist Red Blend (\$350), the JCB Lounge is a one-stop shop for the ever-elusive JCB lifestyle. Bottles are available for purchase (beginning at \$75, all from Boisset's portfolio, which includes his JCB brand, his three California wineries and his family's properties in Burgundy), as well as Baccarat jewelry and glassware (decanters, flutes, etc.), specialty parasols and coffee table books. There are even the unisex broaches that Boisset himself designed. And — why not? — guests may have their tarot cards read while they tie one on.

JCB by Jean-Charles Boisset Tasting Lounge, The Ritz-Carlton, 600 Stockton Street (at Pine Street), S.F. (415) 296-7465. jcbwines.com.