

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Veuve Clicquot lifts women in the arts for limited-edition La Grande Dame' release

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Ms. Paronetto used eco-materials to create giant sculptures of the bottles, such as hemp and responsibly-sourced wood fibers. Image courtesy of Veuve Clicquot

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

LVMH-owned Champagne maker Veuve Clicquot is showcasing the spirit of founder Barbe-Nicole Ponsardin, otherwise known as "Madame Clicquot," through art.

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The maison is unveiling the 24th vintage of La Grande Dame, a 2015 cuve that honors Madame Clicquot's fondness for Pinot Noir, which makes up 90 percent of the blend. By way of a new artistic activation with Italian studio potter Paola Paronetto, the house has sponsored the creation of packaging that strays from Veuve Clicquot's signature yellow shade, commissioning giant sculptures in celebration of the release in the process holistically, the partnership highlights an air of empowerment, one that still grounds the brand today.

"We're delighted to continue the story of La Grande Dame, our exceptional wine, created in homage to Madame Clicquot," said Jean-Marc Gallot, president and CEO of [Veuve Clicquot](#), in a statement.

"La Grande Dame embodies the house's exceptional savoir-faire as well as our love for Pinot Noir," Mr. Gallot said. "For this new vintage, we are honored to collaborate with Paola Paronetto.

"She was inspired by nature and her reading of color to devise the design for La Grande Dame 2015 Her work once again instills a deep message of optimism."

Artistic nature

For over 250 years, Veuve Clicquot has been continuing the legacy of Madame Clicquot's innovation and tenacity.

Taking over the maison at the young age of 27, her strength has defined the label. Her famed "free-spiritedness and true optimism" permeate throughout blends and campaigns today ([see story](#)), according to a statement from Veuve Clicquot.



With every La Grande Dame vintage release, Veuve Clicquot meditates on the house's relationship with the late founder. Image credit: Veuve Clicquot

In 1972, Veuve Clicquot paid her memory tribute with the first La Grande Dame release. Twenty-four vintages later, the brand finds itself honoring another female leader of her craft.

Ms. Paronetto, joining the other female artists the brand has supported ([see story](#)), uses paper clay in her work, a delicate technique that combines cellulose fiber and clay. Thanks to her pieces being made from plant material, there is a certain level of aliveness present throughout her portfolio.

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A post shared by Paola Paronetto (@paolaparonettocreation...)

"This new collaboration with such an iconic House as Veuve Clicquot allows me to explore new horizons," said Ms. Paronetto, in a statement.

"I'm grateful to be able to pay tribute to Madame Clicquot by interpreting this new vintage through the prism of her optimism and audacity," she said. "In all my works, I search for a balance between joy and creativity.

"My connection to nature constantly inspires me to look toward a better future for this new edition of La Grande Dame, I tried a range of six nuanced colors and created a graphic play of light to show them at their best."



The brand has often supported women in the arts through exhibitions and fundraising. Image courtesy of Veuve Clicquot

"Cartoccio" corrugated cardboard, paper pulp, hemp, Forest Stewardship Council-certified wood fibers and cotton culminate in this latest artistic work.

The sculptural aspect, dubbed "Gigantis," includes a composition of three enormous bottles made from her craft and painted vibrantly the entire endeavor took two months to complete.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Paola Paronetto (@paolaparonettocreation...)

"Gigantis," like all her pieces, are colored by her, drawn from Ms. Paronetto's personal palette of 86 colors

comprised entirely of earth and floral tones. The finishing bottle in the array is yellow, standing just over 13 feet high the centerpiece is a nod to optimism and Veuve Clicquot's signature hue ([see story](#)).

A lineup of 21st-century La Grande Dame vintages accompanies the final trio. The move is sensorial, adding the experience of taste to an already highly stimulating display.



With sunlight bathing the larger-than-life bottles and precious wine in rays, the creations coexist, nature being at both of their roots. Image credit: Veuve Clicquot

The wine and art are together reflective of the natural world in both color and material.

As the grape variety used in the vintage is transformed entirely according to the land, sun exposure and year of harvest, the ecological aspect is apt.



Both the artist and Champagne makers turn to the earth for inspiration, forging a link between their crafts. Image courtesy of Veuve Clicquot

La Grande Dame 2015 is made from Grand Crus of the Champagne terroir, including Verzy, Verzenay, Bouzy, Ambonnay, Avize, Ay, Oger and Mesnil-sur-Oger. Providing a true taste of the land, it is a palatable kaleidoscope of the most historic grapevines.

With notes of jasmine, pear, acacia and clementine, the Champagne is crisp, pairing well with sweet vegetables and tart fruits such as green apple, pea and carrot.



The black grapes create a golden nectar when turned into wine, offering a level of contrast similar to that of the artist's many colors used in the accompanying art. Image credit: Veuve Clicquot

The springtime colors used in the accompanying creations reflect this tasting profile. Ms. Paronetto named her chosen shades Dark Blue, Night, Cloud, Lavender, Mint and Teal.

The resulting limited-edition gift boxes for La Grande Dame 2015 are truly unique, coming in six whimsical hues one for each year the wine was aged and are available for purchase [online](#) for \$220.

Thanks to the sustainable fiber boxes, the packs have a 30 percent smaller impact than any previous Veuve Clicquot pack, according to the brand.



The sustainable box represents the artist's eco-craft and the brand's commitment to strong ESG practices as a company. Image courtesy of Veuve Clicquot

The labels on each bottle are additionally inspired by the "Corteccia" technique's texture, in homage to Ms. Paronetto's earthen style and environmentally-friendly art.

The bottles also contain La Grande Dame's very first personalization program, in an effort to drive "emotional connection" with customers, according to the brand.

Made from luxury leather deadstock, six charms ranging in colors have been crafted to adorn the bottleneck. Their shapes are based on Veuve Clicquot's heritage, the words printed on each are customizable.

Drinking in knowledge

Veuve Clicquot tapped cellar master Didier Mariotti to provide consumer-facing education on the blend.

Delicacy and precision are embodied in La Grande Dame's complexity

In a video just under 90 seconds long, Mr. Mariotti speaks to Madame Clicquot's gumption and skill. He relates her to Ms. Paronetto, linking the women's drive for excellence, originality and the pursuit of what they are passionate about.

Mr. Mariotti is to be among the wine experts part of the "Cellar in the Sea" culinary trip in June of this year, slated to take place in the Baltic Sea ([see story](#)).

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