Beat: Lifestyle

HONORING THE RESERVES: GRAND MARNIER Unveils EXCEPTIONAL CUVEES RANGE

THE DEBUT OF ITS EXCEPTIONAL RANGE

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USPA NEWS - Grand Marnier announces the debut of its Exceptional Range, starting with the launch of one of two rare Grand Cuvees: Quintessence. This exquisite spirit pays homage to the liqueur's exalted history and showcases the highest expressions of the iconic French Maison, demonstrating how the most complex flavors can be derived from seemingly the simplest of combinations: cognac, orange essence, wood, and time.

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Quintessence is a tribute to the origins of Grand Marnier, a masterpiece elevating the assemblage of cognac and bigaradia orange to its ultimate expression. It showcases the rarest and oldest hors d'âge Cognacs. Each was exclusively selected from Grande Champagne and carefully aged in Paradis, the personal reserves of the Marnier Lapostolle family cellar. Raguenaud then added the finest Bigaradia orange peels, double-distilled to ensure an intensity of flavors, drawing upon instincts honed from his nearly two decades at the house. This painstaking double-distillation and careful work yields a rich, smooth vintage liquid, with dry fruits facets of apricot and walnut, underlined by a warm dark vanilla base.

Inspired by luxury and distinction, Grand Marnier was founded in 1880, when Louis-Alexandre Marnier Lapostolle began stirring Citrus Bigaradia, the bitter aromatic orange – a rare treasure in Europe with refined French cognac. By blending the cognac with the essence of citrus, he established a way to preserve a captivating yet fleeting fragrance that gave permanence to a passing sensory impression.

Citrus Bigaradia continues to enchant and inspire Grand Marnier's makers today, including Historic Master Blender Patrick Raguenaud who looked to the Maison's archives for the creation of Quintessence. There, he found an old recipe where the Bigaradia orange was macerated in Cognac and used it to create Quintessence.

Grand Cuvée Quintessence is the essence of the exceptional. Complementing the quality of the liquid is a decanter handmade by Baccarat, inspired by the iconic original bottle of Grand Marnier made centuries ago. Like the completion of a perfect circle, the two historic brand houses have come together once more to reignite their timeless passion for French excellence.

Made by Baccarat's masterful artisans, each decanter is unique and mouthblown at 1450 degrees. It features a hypnotic, never-ending twist that plunges into the unrivalled elegance of the rarest cognac adorned with a hand-made stopper.

An exclusive collection that will only be available at fine retailers in selective markets in 2022, only 1,000 bottles will be available worldwide the first year.

"It's a rare experience to drink this, even to imagine this kind of cognac is rare. The sensation, the feeling, the perception of what you smell, it is unforgettable," said Raguenaud. "When you blend for Quintessence, you blend a heritage."

- Grand Marnier Révélation reveals the aromatic power of rare XXO Cognacs

In parallel, Grand Marnier will also launch Révélation - the prestige expression of the iconic French house, with the most cognac-forward taste. Révélation's XXO cognacs come exclusively from the distinguished Grande Champagne cru, perfectly aged at the prestigious Chateau Grand Marnier in Bourg-Charente. The final assemblage of cognac and Bigaradia essence rests in oak tanks over several months, allowing 'alchemy' to take over.

With only a dash of Bigaradia essence, the classic sweetness is curbed, while the very soul of the spirit – earthy vanilla, fresh floral essences, and warming almond – is heightened. It presents a complicated balance: without sweet flavor elements to determine consistency, Master Blender Raguenaud is heavily reliant on his nose.

Exceedingly subtle, Grande Cuvée Révélation highlights vanilla and dried fruit – apricots, nuts – before revealing complex notes in its long aftertaste. The fresh and round bitter orange perfectly matches this remarkable Cognac to create an intriguing and lasting encounter.

For Grandes Cuvées sensorial journey, Grand Marnier called on French perfumer Marie Le Febvre to explore the limits of scent perception and aroma identification. The olfactory expertise she has honed over years of developing fragrances proves invaluable for understanding spirits and explaining why Grand Marnier delivers such a compelling organoleptic experience.

"Grand Marnier is a spirit, but it's intricately built as a fragrance. It follows the classical construction of perfume," says Le Febvre.

Both Exceptional Cuvées will launch in select markets and will retail for $3,500 USD (Quintessence) and $700 USD (Révélation).
*Only Quintessence is encased in a Baccarat decanter.

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Ruby BIRD
http://www.portfolio.uspa24.com/
Yasmina BEDDOU
http://www.yasmina-beddou.uspa24.com/

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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