



# A Living Tradition

Celebrating 150 years of **CAMUS**



**H**AILING FROM a country where celebrating independence is practically an everyday fête, this year the House of Camus (pronounced: “Kah-moo”) is celebrating 150 years as the largest family-owned, independent cognac maker in the world.

To mark the milestone, fifth-generation owner Cyril Camus has launched the historic cognac Cuvée 5.150, which is as intriguing in flavor and passion as the family’s rich legacy. Camus also released 1,492 limited-edition, numbered Baccarat crystal decanters filled with the golden drink — blended from five distinct eaux-de-vie that each exemplifies the essence of its respective generation — as part of its Masterpiece Collection, which retails from \$5,600 to around \$13,500. In honor of all of the above, this month, House of Camus is hosting an intimate celebration among the vineyards at the family’s château in Cognac, France.

Before the festivities, though, *American Way* had the chance to sit down with the debonair, 42-year-old father of two to savor where this passionate brand has been through the past 150 years and to get a taste of what is yet to come.

**AMERICAN WAY: Tell us about the château. What was it like growing up in Cognac?**

**CYRIL CAMUS:** Quite nice. Cognac is a great place. I always said I grew up in the middle of the vineyards, with the product itself. What was around the castle left more of a lasting impression than the house itself.

**AW: How has the family’s legacy been passed down through the generations?**

**CC:** I think you find [our legacy] in every bottle of Camus — and in the people of the company as well. Passion is something that sets the company apart, and it’s basically been about maintaining our values and passion and passing that on. We’ve learned that it’s actually a great thing to live by your values, lead by your philosophy and always put your product first. The rest of it takes care of itself. When you look at cognac, I’m actually selling products that my father and his father distilled. So

everything I’m doing today and producing today, I will never get a chance to sell. It will be my sons and their sons or daughters selling it.

**AW: Was it love at first sip with cognac?**

**CC:** I unofficially tried it for the first time when I was 11 — not condoned by my parents. My brother and I were earning pocket money for clearing up the dishes after everybody had left my parents’ dinner party, and someone hadn’t finished his cognac. I wanted to see what it was that everybody was talking about. Let’s just say that when you’re 11, your palate is not ready.

**AW: How do you recommend drinking it?**

**CC:** Something I would always insist on is to enjoy it on the nose and then savor it on your palate. With most spirits, people will take a glass and bring it to the lips and drink, but with cognac, you always bring it to your nose first because it’s such a dramatic spirit. You actually start with the nose, swirling the cognac in the glass to release and distinguish the different aromas, and then you go to the sipping later on.

**AW: Tell us about the new cuvée.**

**CC:** It’s a product that has to be experienced. Describing it wouldn’t give it much justice. Basically, this cuvée is a blend of five different cognacs, and each cognac was picked to best exemplify or symbolize the different personalities of each generation of the family [who has] run the company. Cognac has a way of finding its own blends, and this cuvée is a symbolic product in a lot of ways. This is quite the milestone for us.

**AW: What’s next for the company?**

**CC:** Keep growing, keep innovating, keep respecting the past and looking to the future.

## The Perfect Way to Sip Camus

Camus Cognac 150-Year Special

1 oz. Camus VSOP Elegance  
 ½ oz. cane-sugar syrup  
 Three drops of violet liqueur  
 3 oz. Champagne brut  
 1 maraschino cherry

Pour the first four ingredients into a champagne flute in the order listed. Garnish with the maraschino cherry.

For more information about Camus, visit [www.camus.fr](http://www.camus.fr)