

Bisquit & Dubouché's Vincent Chappe on championing Cognac craft and community

By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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Vincent Chappe, Bisquit & Dubouché global brand ambassador (or *ambassadeur global de la maison*), has lived and breathed Cognac for more than 40 years.



Bisquit & Dubouché global brand ambassador Vincent Chappe. Source: Supplied

Born in Jarnac within the Cognac region in France, he hails from a long generation of vine growers, distillers and packagers of Cognac and continued this tradition by forging an illustrious career in the liquor industry.

Since 2009, Chappe has been with 200-year-old heritage Cognac brand Bisquit & Dubouché, initially as its brand guardian, representative and president. And when Campari Group [acquired Bisquit & Dubouché](#) from Distell in 2018, Chappe was part and parcel of the deal, and he played a paramount role in the brand's 2019 global relaunch lending his expertise not only in Cognac, but marketing and packaging.

The Cognac veteran recently embarked on a visit to South Africa, which happens to be a prominent Cognac market globally and a regional growth opportunity for Bisquit. SA is also a rare market for the brand as its three expressions - Bisquit & Dubouché XO, Bisquit & Dubouché VSOP and Bisquit & Dubouché VS - are all available for sale in the country.

During Chappe's SA tour, the brand hosted an intimate dinner for select media and partners, pairing the various Bisquit expressions with culinary creations served up from the Gorgeous George Hotel kitchen in Cape Town. It was here that Chappe's passion for the art of Cognac production and his deep appreciation for the tight-knit community involved in the creation of the Bisquit & Dubouché spirit was apparent.

We caught up with Chappe to discuss his passionate dedication to being an advocate of Cognac culture and what South Africa means to him and the Bisquit & Dubouché brand.

■ **Vincent, during dinner you spoke of your love for South Africa, and Cape Town in particular. What attracts you to the city?**

I have loved and admired South Africa ever since my first visit 13 years ago: the stunning landscapes, blending land and sea at such great scale, but also the amazing cities and towns all over, be it Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and of course Cape Town – each have so much to offer.

I'll never grow tired of hiking around Table Mountain, visiting the Lion's Head, Signal Hill... I enjoy the fresh spirit of all the locals, who are passionate, energising, positive and kind – with a very dynamic younger generation! I've always felt very welcome and look forward to visiting once again.



Source: Supplied

■ **On a related note, what does the South African market mean to Bisquit & Dubouché from a commercial perspective?**

South Africa is one of the most dynamic Cognac markets globally and is now the fifth global Cognac market after the US, China, UK and Russia. Bisquit & Dubouché specifically has been established in South Africa since 2010, in the early days, when the Cognac category was still very nascent.

We are very pleased to have a strong footprint and great recognition amongst top players in the country today. Our presence is growing at speed and not showing any signs of stopping thanks to our passionate teams on the ground and beyond – the South African market is very much a priority for us.

■ **What do you view as the most important part of your role as global ambassador for the brand?**

Every aspect of the role is important! I live and breathe the brand all day, every day. I am always 'On' to support and champion the brand whenever and wherever I can, making sure that people get the best insights when it comes to who we are, the amazing liquid we create and the Cognac category as a whole.

I have been a partner of Bisquit & Dubouché for over 15 years and supported Campari Group when they acquired the brand, helping train teams at all levels, and helping them further embrace the wonderful world of Cognac. Amongst many other activities, I train sales teams, speak with media, consult in marketing and communication operations with colleagues, journalists, and Cognac lovers around the world. No stone should be left unturned.

■ **How do you believe the acquisition of Bisquit & Dubouché by Campari Group impacted the brand and its**

trajectory?

Bisquit & Dubouché has been a successful brand over time - ranking second and third globally over the course of the 19th century and is now living a new revival in recent years. The brand has shown great growth potential since its foundation in 1819 and, is currently faring well in top Cognac markets including USA, Canada, Russia, Europe, South Africa and Asia.

Campari Group is one of the leading spirit groups worldwide, with a fantastic portfolio of iconic brands and a highly developed network. From distribution to the extraordinary craft that is implemented in each and every of their products, Campari Group nurtures the legacy of its brands, propelling them to reach their full potential.

The acquisition by Campari Group and the exciting initiatives that have taken place or are in the works are an amazing booster for Bisquit & Dubouché today and tomorrow, and I can't wait to see what the future holds.

■ You've dedicated your life not only to Cognac, but the Cognac community? What makes this community so special to you?

The Cognac appellation is broad, but Cognac, as well as Jarnac and Segonzac, where Cognac spirit comes from, are small cities in themselves. In Cognac, everyone knows each other; from the grower to the distiller, to the merchant and the bottler – it's a small, tight-knit community and we all partner together.

We've been to school together, grew up together, and are all good friends... or not – in any way, we are all connected and respect and support each other to reach our common goal: support the category and share our unique liquid with the world. In Cognac, you will find approximately 4,300 wines growers, 1,300 professional distillers and grower-distillers and 290 merchants.

This passionate, dedicated and knowledgeable community is extremely special and, it is important that we continue to build it by transmitting our expertise and appetite to the next generations.



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■ What for you are the defining characteristic that sets Bisquit & Dubouché apart from other Cognacs?

Bisquit & Dubouché is exceptional Cognac thanks to its standout liquid properties – our meticulous double distillation method sets us apart be it in the process itself or the final product. Though rooted in tradition, our distillation technique is different from all other Cognac as it is longer and more intrinsic than it is usually custom, as we look to reach the richest aromas in the esters.

This technique, which we like to call the ‘long cut method’ is challenging and requires the skill and expertise of our master distillers who work hard to deliver the rich, smooth, and mellow flavors that are so synonymous with the brand. Bisquit & Dubouché is a one-of-a-kind Cognac with over 200 years of history.

With two, disruptive and entrepreneurial founders Alexandre Bisquit and Adrien Dubouché, and its historical French roots, the brand has always been at the forefront of innovation and has many stories to tell. Today, we thrive to keep this legacy alive.

■ Your perfect serve of Bisquit & Dubouché?

There are many! But here are some of my favorite hero serves to inspire...

- For our XO: neat in a tulip glass, best enjoyed with friends, out or at home
- For our VSOP: Simply on the rocks or mixed with a ginger ale or even used in best-in-class cocktails such as the Sidecar or the Sazerac
- For our VS: With ginger ale, or frozen (-18°C) alongside smoked salmon or blue cheese. A must try!

■ What has been the most rewarding part of your journey with Bisquit & Dubouché?

Where to even begin! I have enjoyed every minute of every day working for this emblematic brand. Every single person I have met, every experience and every project I had the chance to attend since my first day has been endlessly rewarding. It's all about passion, passion and more passion for me.

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