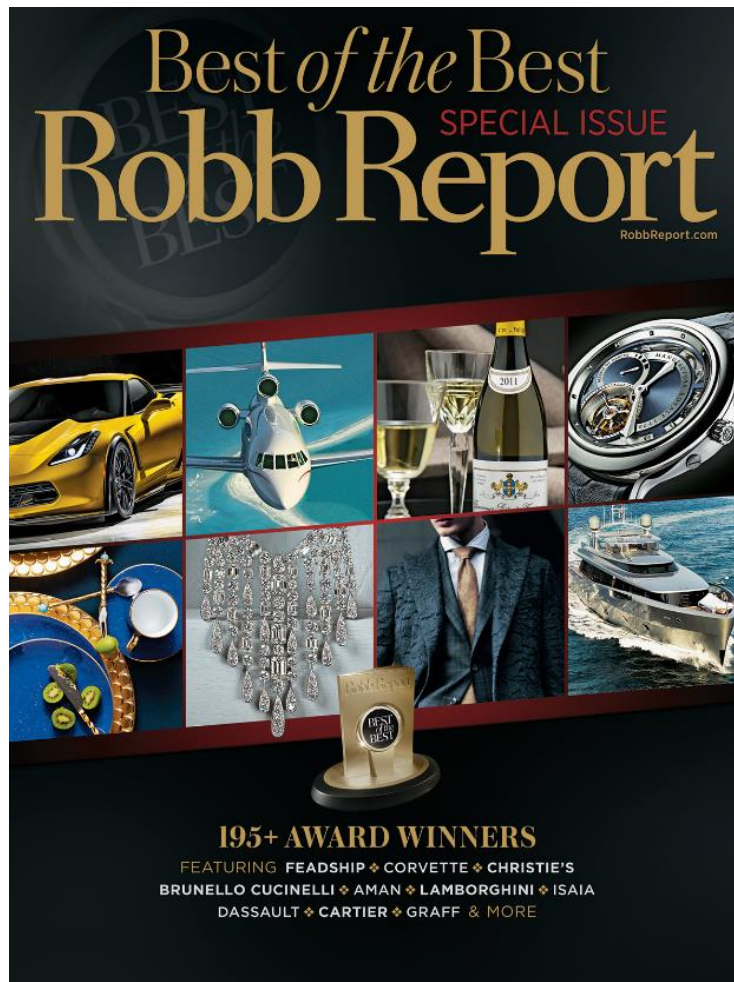


Robb Report

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Alexander Lobrano

Since it opened in December in an 18th-century manor house, **Joël Robuchon's La Grande Maison** (lagrandemaison-bordeaux.com) has been the most sought-after reservation in Bordeaux. "My intention was to create a table that celebrates the great traditions of French cooking," says Robuchon, who owns the restaurant and boutique hotel with vintner Bernard Magrez. "This is why there are lots of dishes that are served and carved table-side—it creates a sense of ceremony and conviviality." A classic tournedo Rossini—a filet of beef topped with foie gras—is presented with the chef's famously silky butter-rich potato puree and a small serving of pommes soufflées, or puffy slices of deep-fried potato. Salmon is grilled over grapevine trimmings that give it a gently resinous flavor, and guinea hen is spit-roasted for two. All meals begin with a suite of hors d'oeuvres that are miniature versions of some of Robuchon's most famous dishes, including truffled langoustine with green cabbage and a medallion of crab aspic topped with dressed crabmeat and Sologne caviar. And for a few fortunate guests, the evening ends in one of the five luxurious guest rooms upstairs from the restaurant.