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Chateau Haut-Brion gala dinner in LA celebrates 75 years of Dillon ownership

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HRH Prince Robert of Luxembourg was in Los Angeles Wednesday for the 7th of 8 grand dinners being held around the world celebrating the 75th anniversary of the acquisition of Bordeaux's first grand cru classe Chateau Haut-Brion by his great grandfather, American investment banker Clarence Dillon. The lavish dinner held at the Vibiana in downtown Los Angeles was prepared by Chef Thomas Keller of Napa Valley's French Laundry for an exclusive group of wine lovers, industry tastemakers and the creative elite including Jennifer Aniston, Marg Helgenberger, Quincy Jones and Adrien Brody.

Clarence Dillon's love for wine – and food – was developed early, growing up with a French-Swedish mother and travelling to Europe as a student. He studied art and cuisine at Le Cordon Bleu in addition to his business activities, becoming quite the Renaissance man. After Prohibition ended in 1933, Dillon began to search for winery properties to in part fill the potential demand for fine wine. Quite interesting to Prince Robert in sifting through his great grandfather's old papers, Dillon's search was not limited to Bordeaux. He also looked to Champagne and even to the Napa Valley, with Beaulieu Vineyards. Ultimately, he was drawn to the wines of Chateau Haut-Brion and the challenge of restoring a property that had been somewhat neglected during weak economic times.

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