



# ARNAUD DONCKELE



## ARNAUD DONCKELE'S DNA

It's the same artist working on two canvases: the styles are different but the brush stroke is unmistakable. At Cheval Blanc Paris, the palette is an array of unforgettable sauces. At Cheval Blanc St-Tropez, it is the abundance and variety of Provence. Behind both is the Chef Arnaud Donckele and his distinct signature is on every dish. A signature that represents the labour of love and sharing in the ingredients and those who cultivate, harvest, pick, breed and fish for them. *"Because it is essential to understand that behind a product, there is a face and respect for the work that goes into it,"* the Chef says. A return to roots is embodied by these artisans of the land and sea who entrust Arnaud with their bounty and allow him to write his cookbook day by day. Like musical notes, this bountiful harvest of ingredients gives the Chef unlimited range in the scores that he composes. Linked to tradition but unlimited in imagination, he creates modern sauces that arrive like the culmination of a fine perfume or a vintage wine. Behind this process of creation is a culture of cooking that transcends recipes. A philosophy that favours instinct and the moment. A concern for the container and the content. A school of sincerity and freedom that can now be found from North to South, in both Paris and St-Tropez, two venues with a common ethos: to show excellence without showing off. In each place, the kitchen team is a family animated by the desire to transmit — technique, knowledge, taste. *"Impossible to tell the story alone. I have learned that we are better when we are together,"* Arnaud says. This culture of creation is carried forward and ensured by faithful confidants — Clément Bécherel in the capital and Augustin de Margerie in the Var. A loyal guard around Arnaud who join in the composition of harmonious kitchen melodies so that each guest can discover his own Proust's madeleine.



PLÉNITUDE  
ARNAUD DONCKELE



#### PLÉNITUDE AT CHEVAL BLANC PARIS

As the curtain comes up, the sauce is centre stage. Throughout the show, the sauce stars at the gastronomic table of Cheval Blanc Paris. At Plénitude, Arnaud Donckele has donned the apron of a master perfumer. That of a “nose” paying homage to the four seasons as manifested in the sauce, elevated from its standard supporting role to take the lead in this theatre where time has suspended its flight. These *"Absolute Blends"*, as they are called by their creator, bloom like bouquets. A hundred or so timeless fragrances revealed in an alphabetic book of magic spells. A precious collection of incredibly complex elixirs with top, middle and bottom notes that combine as many as twelve ingredients, many of which no one could blindly guess. Under the leadership of Alexandre Larvoir, the balletic service team knows by heart these poetically titled blends, which set the beat of the menu and form the connecting thread of the meal. One must draw from these magical potions to sublimate, enhance, awaken and perfume the *"Preludes"* (starters), the *"Salty and Sweet Waters"* (fish), the *"Meadows and Country Lands"* (meats) and the *"Sweet Fragrances"* (desserts). Because here, the dishes are in tune with the sauces, and not the other way around. From savoury to sweet, liquid elevates solid, serving as a detonator of flavour. A succession of emotions and surprises unveils the best of each French region's terroir — so many instantaneous moments that meet on the plate, bringing the day's hours together in a natural fusion of taste and beauty. The alchemy of a tailor-made olfactory palette. The *"Lady Godiva"* sabayon, a skilful marriage of land and sea (langoustine consommé, head butter, rosemary infusion, chestnut honey reduction...), caresses the langoustine or the crab. The *"Ode à l'Iode"* broth, an emanation of the sea spray (fish stock, dried plankton powder, the juice of the haliotis abalone...), transcends turbot, brill, Saint-Pierre, plaice. The fricassée *"Dévoyée"*, a vegetable-fortified concoction (veal stock, salsify, Jerusalem artichokes, wilted carrot, bay leaf...), enhances every nuance in the veal, lamb shoulder, beef cheek or pork belly. The pectin and condiment sauce *"Esquisse d'Endocarpe"*, a concentrate of citrus fruits and herbs (lemon maceration, limoncello, mandarin olive oil...), is melded with a satiny composition of six citrus fruits, five sweet and peppery herbs and a dairy cream. Savouring the quintessence of these consommés, veloutés, soups, double or even triple sauces is an experience to be lived to the fullest. Each of these blends is brought to its crescendo by Arnaud Donckele, who feels free to greet his guests in the dining room as well as inviting them into his inestimable kitchen.

LA VAGUE D'OR  
ARNAUD DONCKELE



**LA VAGUE D'OR AT CHEVAL BLANC ST-TROPEZ**

The spirit of this place emanates from the fine sand of the Bouillabaisse beach. This timeless spot on the French Riviera is a harmonious extension of the grounds at Cheval Blanc St-Tropez, shaded by umbrella pines, cypresses and palm trees. The Mediterranean forms the sublime foreground, with the Maures massif as the incomparable backdrop. The essential elements: water and earth, sea and mountain. It is from the landscape of Provence and the people who live and work here that Arnaud Donckele draws his inspiration. An ecstatic journey full of sun and flavours. From the fresh catch of the last fishermen of the village to the fruit and vegetable harvest of Yann Ménard at the Jardin de la Piboule in Cogolin. From the exquisite olive oil of Éric Barnéoud-Chapelier at the Domaine de Val-de-Bois in Gassin to the goat and sheep-milk cheeses of Loïc de Saleneuve in Collobrières: La Vague d'Or is a concerto where, from May to October, Arnaud Donckele hits the high notes in the kitchen and Thierry Di Tullio keeps perfect time with his baton in the dining room. This performance is essentially *tropézien*. Close your eyes and let yourself be carried away as if in a sun-baked novel by the Provençal bard, Jean Giono. We encounter the albacore anew, taken from the anonymity in the Mediterranean, grilled in the hearth and made into something sublime with a satiny blend of bonito, wine vinegar and wild myrtle. We get to know the contemporary "Borgne", an ochre-red, rock-fish soup brimming with sea bass, girelle, capon and bream. We race to catch up with a saddle of rabbit rolled with country bacon "Claudette style" and blue lobster transformed by a sparkling broth with rosemary. We finish the adventure by crossing the sweetness of a symphony of blackberries, lychees and roasted almonds in nougat form with a glaze of cabbage rose. The epilogue: a bucolic escapade surveying the reefs, vegetable gardens, plains, hills and orchards of the Côte d'Azur.



## BIOGRAPHY

Born on March 29, 1977 in Rouen in northwestern France, Arnaud Donckele is the grandson of farmers and the son of *charcutiers-traiteurs*. In love with the art of cooking since childhood, this pure Norman began working and learning in the kitchen very early in life. His childhood memories of the family vegetable garden and farm produce continue to shape his life as a Chef, artisan and creative artist. Arnaud Donckele trained alongside the greatest French Chefs. He began his apprenticeship at Goumard Prunier in Paris, which then opened the doors to the most esteemed addresses: Les Prés d'Eugénie led by the Chef Michel Guérard in Eugénie-les-Bains, Le Louis XV with Alain Ducasse in Monaco, the Plaza Athénée by the same Chef in Paris and the Lasserre restaurant, also in Paris, where he quickly became the right-hand man of Chef Jean-Louis Nomicos. He came out of his apprenticeship with a sharp technique, a taste for rigour and an immense passion for ingredients. His career path led him to take charge of the kitchens at Cheval Blanc St-Tropez and Cheval Blanc Paris.

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2005: Arnaud Donckele becomes the Chef of La Vague d'Or in St-Tropez

2010: second star in the MICHELIN Guide

2013: third star in the MICHELIN Guide. At 35, he becomes one of the youngest Chefs in the world to receive this distinction

2015: Arnaud Donckele publishes *Ma Provence, recettes de chef* (Flammarion)

2016: 5 toques and 19/20 in the Gault & Millau Guide

2017: 19,5/20 in the Gault & Millau Guide

2018: Arnaud Donckele is crowned best Chef in the world by his peers at the World Chef Summit in Monaco

2020: Arnaud Donckele is crowned Chef of the Year by the Gault & Millau Guide

2021: La Vague d'Or is ranked second-best restaurant in the world by La Liste which ranks the 1,000 best restaurants in the world

2021: Arnaud Donckele becomes the Chef of Plénitude, the gastronomic table of Cheval Blanc Paris

2022 : three MICHELIN stars for Plénitude at Cheval Blanc Paris after the opening

2023 : 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the three MICHELIN stars of La Vague d'Or at St-Tropez

2024 : Plénitude is ranked 18<sup>th</sup> best restaurant in the world at The World's 50 Best Restaurants

**CHEVAL BLANC PARIS**

In 2021, the Cheval Blanc collection revealed its urban Maison in the heart of Paris. Overlooking the Seine, just a stone's throw from the Louvre and the Marais, Cheval Blanc Paris breathes new life into La Samaritaine's iconic Art Deco building a stone's throw away. Showcasing the French art de vivre and inspired by a bold, contemporary spirit, its 72 keys - 26 rooms and 46 suites - along with its living areas, restaurants and well-being facilities were imagined by architects Edouard François and Peter Marino. Chef Arnaud Donckele orchestrates a culinary symphony at the gastronomic restaurant Plénitude - a three-MICHELIN-starred restaurant, whilst Pastry Chef Maxime Frédéric oversees the Maison's entire gourmet composition. Completing the culinary offering, the 7<sup>th</sup> floor is home to a contemporary Parisian brasserie awarded one MICHELIN star, Le Tout-Paris, as well as an Italian restaurant, Langosteria, opening onto a spacious tree-lined terrace, embracing the most beautiful views of Paris. Hakuba, the new Japanese restaurant, is unveiled on the ground floor. At the heart of the Maison, a curved swimming pool adorned with mosaics is an invitation to a sensory escape. Not forgetting the exclusive Dior Spa Cheval Blanc Paris for a holistic immersion in the world of Maison Dior. Dreamt up for children by sailor Maud Fontenoy, Le Carrousel kids' club celebrates the family spirit and the importance of environmental awareness. Intuitively pre-empting every desire, the Ambassadeurs carefully carve out each detail, each gesture, each personal touch to ensure every stay is an unforgettable one. Cheval Blanc Paris: more than an address, it is a destination.

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**CHEVAL BLANC ST-TROPEZ**

Cheval Blanc St-Tropez is a tranquil treasure on the Mediterranean coast. Walking distance from the centre of St-Tropez, the Maison also offers direct access to the beach, a position that makes it ideal for alternating between the pleasures of the sea and escapades in the heart of the mythic village. In true Saint-Tropez style, the 30 rooms and suites offer a postcard-worthy view of the sea, of the pine forest or of the famed village of Saint-Tropez. Most rooms feature a terrace or spacious balcony surrounded by the scent of pine trees. Cheval Blanc St-Tropez hosts two restaurants and one bar for a true gastronomic escape. Chef Arnaud Donckele's cuisine is a colourful, vibrantly whimsical journey through the Mediterranean Sea. La Vague d'Or awarded three MICHELIN stars, five toques and a rating of 19/20 by the Gault & Millau, invites guests on a magical journey between land and sea. For a relaxed lunch in front of the water, La Terrasse, awarded one MICHELIN star, offers modern, simplistic cuisine with hints of the Mediterranean Sea, highlighting local, seasonal ingredients. With a nautical-inspired décor, Le Bar invites all to a refreshing interlude. The white sandy beach of Bouillabaisse hosts sixty loungers available for guests, a prime setting for lounging in privacy with views of the Bay of Saint-Tropez. Continually at 30 degrees, the infinity pool extends the sweet sensation of a swim and pleasantly enlivens the Maison. At the end of the beach, boats may dock at the jetty, the departure point for sea excursions and water sports. In a welcoming atmosphere of serenity, Guerlain has created a wide range of massages and treatments, specially conceived for Spa Cheval Blanc St-Tropez.

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**LVMH HOTEL MANAGEMENT**

Developed by LVMH Hotel Management, Cheval Blanc is a brand of exceptional Maisons. The first one, Cheval Blanc Courchevel, opened in 2006 in the heart of the French Alps, followed by Cheval Blanc Randheli which opened in the Maldives in autumn 2013. The brand has continued its development with the opening of Cheval Blanc St Barth Isle de France in the French West Indies in October 2014, then acquired the Résidence de la Pinède in 2016 which joins the collection as Cheval Blanc St-Tropez in May 2019. Cheval Blanc Paris takes its place within the Samaritaine iconic building last September 2021. LVMH Hotel Management also operates the White 1921 Courchevel and the White 1921 Saint-Tropez.

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