

News



Masseto, Ornellaia part ways

Masseto is without a doubt one of the best representatives and standard-bearers of Italian wine in the world, both at auctions and on the Liv-Ex. It is produced, of course, by Tenuta dell'Ornellaia, which also produces another heavyweight, Ornellaia itself - but since 2006 the company is formally named "Ornellaia and Masseto" and, as Managing Director Giovanni Geddes explained to WineNews, "our strategy is to keep the two brands as separated as possible. We never feature both in the same event, and our commercial strategy reflects this". When two champs race together, after all, they both must go for their own goals...



SMS Change trumps all

Apparently, nothing is really immune to change, not even "His Majesty" Champagne - at least according to Julie Campos, Director of Sales for Maison Nicolas Feuillatte, one of the biggest cooperatives in the region. In a recent interview, Campos warned that Champagne wines risk losing an entire generation of consumers in the most relevant markets in the world in favour of Italian Prosecco and other sparkling wines, like Californian or Spanish, due to their more "relaxed" and "hip" image and communication strategies. Meanwhile, the Consortium of Prosecco DOC and the Ermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg have signed a partnership for a series of joint cultural and scientific studies: the wine will also be "Vin d'honneur" of the museum for the next five years.

Report

Wine & food under the tree

According to a joint Vinality-WineNews survey, 95% of Italian wine lovers would love to receive a wine&food-related gift, and 60% will spend between 100 and 200 Euros for this kind of present. Moreover, 82% will choose wine as a gift and 39% will spend the same amount that they spent in 2012 for wine&food products, crisis or no crisis. Regarding wine, a whopping 46% wish to receive a bottle of a symbol of Italian wine, Barolo, with Amarone and the ever-present Champagne both at 20%.



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First Page

Italy conquers France in the glass and at the table

Italy is ever more present in the glasses and on the tables of France, and the interest for Italian wine & food is markedly on the rise on the other side of the Alps, judging from commercial events of some French mass retail chains both in France and abroad, like the one titled "The flavours of the Regions" by Auchan in China. The number of Italian winemaking firms participating in the "La Sélection Italienne du Grand Tasting" of the 2013 edition of "Le Grand Tasting Paris" has never been higher. It is the most important public wine-related event in France, organized by two of the most important French wine writers - Michel Bettane and Thierry Desseauve - and it took place yesterday at the Carrousel du Louvre. A heady mix of small and big firms, of renowned and less-known winemakers, which represent France's interest towards both the variety and the overall quality of Italian wines. "Their interest is shown by the rising presence of Italian wine in bistros from Paris to Marseille and Lyon", Bernardo Conticelli, Project Manager for Bettand and Desseauve, told WineNews, "thanks to a new generation of sommeliers that have a more open mentality, a higher degree of curiosity and a more pronounced will to spread the knowledge of wines from all over the world, especially Italian ones. They are not only threading old paths with names like Barolo and Brunello, but looking for quality and indigenous grapes, from Sicily to Alto Adige". Italy also means haute cuisine, and so, after capturing the palate and the attention of French pupils with Gianfranco Vissani's "lessons", the Italian Institute of Culture in Paris has revamped the "The Italian in the kitchen" project, and from January onwards it will offer a series of meetings with some of the greatest Italian chefs - like Davide Oldani, Chicco Cerea, Massimo Bottura and others - in order to showcase the essence of Italian cuisine to aspiring French chefs and aficionados. "We came up with the idea", Marina Valensise, Director of the institute, told WineNews, "after seeing the rising success of Italian cuisine. Tiramisù is on the menus of a lot of French restaurants and French families have pasta at least once a week"...

Focus

Press tours and "tours by press"

Press tours, organized by firms and consortiums in order to let journalists discover the territory, are giving way to "tours by press". That is, those initiatives - especially abroad, where the market is going strong and CMO funds can be used - organized by media groups and journalists themselves, (in most cases former writers for important specialized outlets) and sometimes "one-man-shows", which have joined their work as critics to the organization of events, tastings and so on. The most famous example is James Suckling, former Italian wines critic for "Wine Spectator" magazine, who is currently touring China with his "Great Wines of Italy" event, but many a Master of Wine and critic, like the French Bettane and Desseauve, do the same, just to name a few. Media groups are doing it as well, like the Italian "Gambero Rosso" with its road shows, or "Wine Spectator" magazine itself - a respected voice of American critique, but also an organizer of events both in the U.S. and in Italy - with Opera Wine (together with Vinality). The list could go on, showing just how much the way of communicating wine has changed over the years...



Wine & Food

Less quantity, more value for Italian wine exports

Less wine is going out of Italy, but more money is flowing in for Italian winemakers, according to export data from ISTAT regarding the first 8 months of 2013, with revenues going up 8% and quantity down 4% - which could come to mean a loss in market shares in some countries. Especially for "on tap" wine, since the high rise in prices has turned into a +21% rise in revenues in foreign markets, even if quantities dropped 8%. Bottled wines have gone down 3% in quantity and up 6% in value, and sparkling wines up 17% and 11% both in quantity and in value.

For the record

Italy in the 2013 "Top Enthusiast 100"

Italy has 17 wines in the 2013 edition of the "Top Enthusiast 100" ranking by "Wine Enthusiast" magazine, with wines selected through a mix of points, price/quality ratio and so on.

The first, at 5, is Chianti Classico Riserva 2009 Villa Cafaggio: "an acknowledgement of the revamping of our firm", General Manager Enzo Ercolino commented.

