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News



Prosecco vs. Champagne?

The world is increasingly thirsty for Prosecco. The Consortium of Prosecco DOC has recently asked the Regional Authorities of Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia to allow de-stocking over 100.000 hectolitres of wine in order to satisfy this growing demand, and to allow producers to sell it as Prosecco DOC. But even if many are increasingly considering Prosecco a worthy competitor to no less than Champagne itself, some are not so keen on the notion. "There is no real rivalry between the two", Thierry Gasco, chef de cave of Pommery, recently told WineNews.tv: "We have nothing to fear, since the market positions of the two are completely different".



A matter of language

Many consider Italian not a particularly "alive" language, so to speak, given the ever more common use of foreign terms used in everyday life in Italy, both written and spoken. Not to mention the fact that, even in the "Belpaese", it is increasingly common to use English as a business language. But Italian is not dead. Quite the opposite, in fact, since some of its terms and expressions, especially those from the worlds of cuisine and also fashion, are all the rage around the world. To the point that Harro Stammerjohann, member of the Academy of Crusca (a veritable temple to Italian) has created an entire dictionary of these "Italianisms" - another sign, maybe, of an increasingly cooler (or "figa") Italy, especially outside our national borders.

Report

Boscaini leads Federvini

Sandro Boscaini, at the helm of Venetian winery Masi, is the new President of Federvini. The assembly meeting, which took place this week in Rome, officially voted him as successor to Lamberto Vallarino Gancia, who led Federvini for two consecutive terms. The assembly also hosted a round table with the two Presidents, titled "Past and Future of a Made in Italy symbol", with Isidoro Trovato, of the national daily "Corriere della Sera", and Deputy Minister for Economic Development, Carlo Calenda.



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First Page

The best schools & courses to cook like a chef

The host of cooking shows and reality shows focusing entirely on cooking make many people believe that it is not that hard, after all, to go at it like a pro. But one just need go with a "hands-on" approach to realize that what looks so simple might not be a walk in the park like throwing a frozen pizza in the oven. If one's love for cooking is genuine, though, there is a myriad of courses to hone one's skills, including those led by a "starred" chef. For example, there is the Course of Professional Italian Cooking by Niko Romito Formazione (www.nikoromitoformazione.it) created by the "3-starred" chef from Abruzzo: it is a 10-month course in theory and practice with chefs and experts from all levels of the business chain. At the Cerea brothers' "Da Vittorio" in Bergamo, the "menu", so to speak, is different, because lessons all focus on a single topic. However, following them all is akin to enrolling in a real school (www.davittorio.com). Ditto for Alberto Faccani, one of the youngest and most promising contemporary Italian cuisine chefs, at "Magnolia" in Cesenatico, where students cook in pairs, learning from other visiting chefs and fattening up one's portfolio of tricks and pro tips (www.magnoliaristorante.it). The approach of Giovanni Grasso and Igor Macchia at "La Credenza", in Turin, is one of the most original without a doubt. There is no fixed program, face-to-face lessons are more than flexible and the schedule can be adapted to the skills and needs of each participant. Nothing is fixed except the length of the lesson, which is 3 hours (www.ristorantelacredenza.it). On the other end of the spectrum, there is Claudio Sadler, whose approach is a bit of a shock therapy, a 4-course menu, explained step by step, all in a single day (www.sadler.it). Ciccio Sultano, instead, simply opens up his house to everyone, with face-to-face lessons that he uses to explain his recipes step by step, to visualize the final result (www.cicciosultano.it). Finally, one can go for the Academy of the "Maestro" Gualtiero Marchesi, which recently opened its doors in Milan. The Academy will join the activities of the International School of Italian Cuisine, whose Dean is Marchesi himself (www.marchesi.it).

Focus

Italian sparklings on a roll in the U.S.

Sparkling wine imports in the United States are growing fast, generally speaking, and Italy has a lot to do with it. According to data from Impact Databank, Italian sparkling wines have gone up 5.5% year over year, reaching a grand total of 80.4 million bottles. Mionetto is in the lead among the most performing brands, spearheading the growth of Prosecco (+27% in 2013 over 2012 and 27.6 million bottles sold, according to Nielsen data), in sharp contrast with the stumble of the most popular Cava in the world, Freixenet (down 4%, but still the single most imported sparkling in the States). Regarding the "hot brands" of sparkling wines, 6 out of 10 come from Italy. Following Freixenet (6.26 million bottles), comes Martini & Rossi, 6.06 million bottles, then Mionetto at spot 4 with 5.18 million bottles. Gallo Winery's La Marca is seventh with 3.9 million bottles, followed by Zonin (3.34 million bottles), Riondo (3.3 million) and Risata, of Prestige Wine & Spirits Group Italia, with 3.15 million bottles sold. What about Champagne? It is stable, at 0.5% growth, even for the two most sold brands in the United States - Veuve Clicquot and Moët & Chandon.



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Wine & Food

Heinz Beck joins 3 stars and a QR-Code for intolerances

Many people suffer from allergies and intolerances, and the menus of venues cannot help but take note of it. But at "La Pergola", the restaurant of Rome's Cavalieri Hilton Hotel, "3-starred" chef Heinz Beck has gone one step further with his "Safety for Food" project, to create a sort of "digital passport" for food, developed through a partnership with Cisco Italia and Penelope. How will it work? "Before choosing a dish from our menu", Beck explained, "my clients will be able to see a photo of the dish through a QR-Code, complete with allergens, ingredients and nutritional information".

For the record

Export growth slowing down for Italian wine

According to the latest data of Unione Italiana Vini, exports of Italian wine have gone up in value only in the first quarter of 2014: less than expected, but still a robust 4%, reaching 875 million Euros. Volumes, on the other hand, are stable, at 2.8 million hectolitres - but the growth is nonetheless far from the impressive +8% of 2013.

