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News



Gorgona's second vintage

The second wine harvest on Gorgona island, home of the last island penitentiary in Italy, is ready - 2.500 bottles and 200 magnums made with Vermentino and Ansonica grapes, carrying the Frescobaldi brand, created by the work of inmates (pictured above with Lamberto Frescobaldi) and a special contribution from the world-famous singer Andrea Bocelli, who designed the label. The 2013 vintage will be available starting this month in the best restaurants and wine shops both in Italy and abroad, and the revenue will be reinvested in the project itself. Frescobaldi has not only decided to give inmates a way to create a new life, but has also started planting a second vineyard.



SMS

If Italy were like its wine

"If Italy's GDP had grown like its wine exports have between 2007 and 2013, our national gross domestic product would be 500 billion Euros bigger, the economic reprise would be in full swing and respecting the European Fiscal Compact would be no problem at all. In 2007, Italian wine exports totalled 3.5 billion Euros, and in 2013 they broke the 5 billion mark. Wine exports have grown fivefold over the rest of all our exports combined, and the money coming from it from it constitutes a sixth of all our domestic surplus". The observation, penned by Giovanni Ajass, head of the Study Service Group of BNL bank, and hosted on "Affari & Finanza", the financial section of Italian daily "La Repubblica", sure gives a lot of food for thought...

First Page

CMO wine under fire from EU Court of Auditors

The Common Market Organization (CMO) is a fundamental tool for the promotion and growth of EU countries wine exports, but the Union Court of Auditors has slammed both its financing measures - calling them "unjustified, because a rural development policy is already in place" - and its promotion efforts, judging them to "have been often used to consolidate existing market footholds instead of gaining new ones, and their impact on the competitiveness of EU wines is not clearly demonstrated". "One should have seen this coming for quite some time", Silvana Ballotta, head of internationalization consulting firm Business Strategies, told WineNews, "and it should be seen as a stimulus to do better. Sadly, though, the Italian Ministry for Agriculture has very recently decided to exclude expenses for controls and project evaluation from the last round of financing". According to Sandro Boscaini, Vice President of the Italian Institute for Quality Wine, "this judgment requires some thought. We have often asked for clearer European guidelines, but to no avail: furthermore, in the current economic context, how can one be competitive without strong promotional efforts"? Still, the Court of Auditors scope of action is consultancy only, and the CMO itself is not at risk, "because the answers from the European Commission are a direct counter to most of those observations", Giuseppe Sciotti, of consulting firm A & Elle Associates, told WineNews. "The Commission stated that the CMO has already reached the goal of equalizing demand and supply. Regarding competitiveness, large-scale distillation has ended, and exports towards foreign countries have gone up both in value and in volume". Furthermore, Sciotti added, the Commission's judgment on CMO is more than positive, since "both the Parliament and the Commission have recently found the reform of the wine sector to be useful, with CE regulation number 1308/20131, confirming the will to give reforms the time they need to make a change, and at the same time widen the array of sub-measures in support programs". So, is this, to quote the Bard, much ado about nothing?

Focus

China's opinion leaders come to Italy

In order to conquer the huge Chinese market, one cannot help but win the hearts and minds of the top influencers on the Asian market before trying to leave their mark on such a potentially daunting consumer population. And this, in a nutshell, is what the Institute of Fine Italian Wines - Premium Brands and the Italia del Vino Consortium (which collectively round up 1.4 billion Euros in turnover, of which 750 million in exports, or 20% of all Italian wine exports) has set their mind to do. From July 6th to the 15th, they will bring 45 of the most important wine opinion leaders in China and Hong Kong to Italy, with the "Italy in China" project, to create the future ambassadors of Italian wine through a first-hand experience with both the finest terroirs and the finest Italian producers. The list of attendees includes Li Demei, Vice Secretary of China Wine Association and journalists such as Yingjie Chen, senior editor of "Wine" magazine, the most important wine publication in China. The project also has the goal of shaking the tree of the Chinese market, since the first quarter of 2014 has seen Chinese imports drop by a whopping 20%, both in value and in volume.



Report

Lis Neris, Venica, Volpe Pasini

The best wine from Friuli, its "banner", of sorts, is "La Vila" 2010 by Lis Neris, winemaker in Friuli Isonzo. The top Sauvignon is "Ronco delle Mele" 2011 by Venica & Venica, from the Collio area and the best Pinot Blanc is "Zuc di Volpe" 2012, by the renowned firm on Friuli's Eastern Hills, Volpe Pasini. These, according to the judges, are the three best wines in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, crowned after a full re-tasting of 37 finalists at the 2012 and 2013 editions of "Friulano & Friends", promoted by Ersas.



CONSORZIO PROMOZIONE
CARIGNANO DEL SULCIS



Wine & Food

Eataly to help earthquake-torn Abruzzi with "Eataly per L'Aquila"

Back in 2009, a massive earthquake ravaged L'Aquila, regional capital of the Abruzzi region, and reconstruction will go on for a long time yet. Eataly has decided to give a helping hand and dedicate a corner of all its stores to 40-50 typical wine & food products of the region, with half of the profits going to the rebuilding effort. Oscar Farinetti announced the project in L'Aquila. "We will start with our store in Rome next September, and roll it out worldwide from there. I will propose the idea to some of my colleagues as well", Eataly's founder added.

For the record

Carrefour invests in Italy

France is betting higher and higher on Italy, as the mass retail giant Carrefour (81 billion Euros in turnover in 2011 and 500.000 employees, 25.000 of which in Italy)

is about to buy 53 supermarkets from the German group Rewe, which also possesses the Penny Market brand, to compensate its loss in sales over the last two years.

