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News



“Leo”, the bottle of Da Vinci

Alessi is one of the most famous Italian design brands in the world and it has just made its debut in the world of the nectar of Bacchus, with three different wines (a Chardonnay, a Pinot Noir and a sweet wine) made on the shores of Orta Lake, and put into a bottle inspired by a Leonardo Da Vinci drawing. Its name is “Leo”, and it is shaped like a lab “balloon” of sorts: the bottles are numbered, and they all sport a motif on the bottom inspired by the Da Vinci’s “knots”, which in turn appear in some of the inventor and artist’s most famous pieces, like the Mona Lisa and the Lady with an Ermine. Definitely a decorative piece more than a mere container...



SMS

Licentious Gallioppo

Back in 1532 the Monastery of San Giovanni a Scorzone, in the Abruzzi region, was closed under orders from the Pope himself due to the bawdy tales that sprung from the goings on between the nuns and the peasants, which happened inside its walls and - as legend has it - were sparked by the wine made with an ancient variety dating back to 1101. Recent analyses have confirmed that it is an ancient variety of Gallioppo, grown by the nuns of the monastery itself, at the time located at Poggio Valle, near Teramo, and that the Villa Colle winery rediscovered eight years ago. And, from that ancient grape, the firm now produces a wine called “luaria” (a sort of popular judge in the Dark Ages sent from the local ruler to administer justice). It is the very first indigenous grape variety in the area.

Report

Vitaly’s long summer

China is big game for the wine world, and that is why Vitaly is going back to Asia for the third time this year, to the China Dalian International Wine & Dine Festival. However, this is definitely not the end of Veronafiere’s strategy for Asia and Oceania, since in 2014 alone its tour will touch South Korea, Australia and Hong Kong as well. Then it will be Russia in November, and one month later the first edition of the Wine2Wine Forum, back in Verona, will take place (www.vitalyinternational.com).



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First Page

Viola: Italian banks “are drawn towards agriculture”

Italian banks have been eyeing the agriculture sector with increasingly great interest, especially in the last ten years. But is this a “passing fad”, since the sector has been one of the most resilient compartments of Italian economy in these crisis-stricken years, or is there more? WineNews asked Fabrizio Viola, CEO of Italian banking group Monte dei Paschi di Siena, which is currently getting back on its feet after the internal and external struggles it has faced recently. “The reason behind this attention is twofold: on one hand we have an industrial sector that has been struck by a deep, long and structural crisis, and on the other we have an agri-food sector that has held its ground, all in all, and I think that the banking system’s re-evaluation of the sector is a prism through which one can see the reprise of the country’s economy. Before looking for innovative industrial evolutions, Italy must give the proper value to what it already has, and that nothing can ever take away from it: agriculture, territories and tourism. And this is no passing fad”. What, though, does a bank look for when it is pondering whether or not to support an agricultural or winemaking business? “In order to work with banks in this sector, and in wine in particular, one must be familiar with the language. Banks, therefore, need to have not only competent personnel on the numbers side, but also people that are just as competent with the realities of agriculture, in order to understand their entrepreneurs. The old land banks were influenced more by agronomists than accountants and this is something to keep in mind. These kinds of businesses have one main asset, which is land, and the capacity to make a good product, and then they have to face reality. So, one must consider revenue, exporting capabilities and brand value, which is an increasingly more important factor even for small businesses”. What about the world of stocks and IPOs? “The timetables of the indexes are rarely compatible with those of agriculture, so maybe institutional investors and private equities might be better - it would be easier to make one’s voice heard and understood”.

Focus

Wine & food according to Cucinelli

Whether one talks of fashion, which is his business, of stock exchanges, which have been his choice to “open oneself to the world”, or of agriculture, which was his first occupation - “I’ve been a farmer until I turned 15” - there are three essential factors to consider: “doing it right, creating special relationships and betting on the territory”. This, as he told WineNews, is the opinion of Brunello Cucinelli, one of the most admired Italian entrepreneurs ever, not only because of the commercial success of his cashmere products, but also for his philanthropic approach to business and territory, as shown by his initiative to renew the town of Solomeo, in Umbria. “I believe that a business”, he said, “needs to have a fantastic relationship with its territory. And, with part of its profits, it should guard it and protect it, as if it had 100 years to live. One needs to look forward. Every one of us has the duty to be contemporary; otherwise, as Voltaire said, if you do not accept the changes in your time, you are accepting only the worst part of them”. His opinion also applies to IPOs for small agri-food businesses: “the important thing is to open up and also become more international”.



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Wine & Food

Sotheby’s & eBay sign an alliance under the star of wine

Technology is a bigger and bigger part of everyone’s life, and losing touch with it can mean losing market shares. Therefore, even an auction giant like Sotheby’s, which has been active for over 270 years, has to keep up with the times and has recently signed an alliance with online auction behemoth eBay. Starting next August, the website will host a section dedicated to Sotheby’s sales, which will host auctions (some of them live) of works of art and fine wines - all available to a potential audience of over 145 million eBay users.

For the record

Gualtiero Marchesi goes hi-tech

Gualtiero Marchesi, undisputed “Maestro” and godfather of Italian cuisine, has not stopped being a trailblazer yet. The patrons of his restaurant at the “La Scala” theatre

in Milan, “Il Marchesino”, now have an iPad menu at their disposal as well, in order to not only preview dishes, but check for common allergies and intolerances.

