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## News



### Inspections for the harvest

The 2014 harvest has started in Italy, from Sicily to Franciacorta, but it is not only a matter of scissors and crates in vineyards. More than 400 Inspectors from the Quality Control and Fraud Prevention Department of the Ministry for Agriculture will be hard at work all over the country, starting this week. The focus will be on the transportation of table grapes, and on the availability of wine byproducts and sugary substances. The wineries' stocks will also be under close scrutiny, together with checks on winemaking practices. In the meantime, as farmers association Coldiretti pointed out, the rainy climate will probably cause an overall drop in quantity compared to last year.



SMS

### Russia still getting EU wine

The Russian embargo on wine & food products coming from both the U.S. and the EU has been on the table for months now, due to rising tensions between the countries involved, but it has still caught many sectors by surprise. Wine and spirits seem to be in the clear, so far, but the focus is high on what could happen any day now, and diplomacy is hard at work to defuse a situation that is of course much bigger than a simple economic retaliation. According to sources contacted by WineNews, even if it is no use crying over yet un-spilled milk, and wine is still being shipped to Russia, being prepared cannot hurt, since in the past few months, a list of products that could have been embargoed had already begun making the rounds, and it included sparkling wines as well.

## Report

### What the first bunches tell

The first opinions on the 2014 harvest have begun to come in from areas where the first bunches have been cut. According to Leonardo Valenti, Professor at Milan University and consultant for Castello Bonomi, the grapes "are not fully ripe but still healthy, have balanced musts and interesting PH and acidity, and maybe a little less alcohol". According to Domenico De Gregorio, of Sicilian giant Settesoli, "quality is promising for whites, with nice freshness and intense aromas for Pinot Grigio and Sauvignon".



CONSORZIO PROMOZIONE  
CARIGNANO DEL SULCIS



## First Page

### Vernaccia & Vino Nobile, united in history

The Consortium of the San Gimignano Denomination and its counterpart for Vino Nobile di Montepulciano have recently joined forces, with a clear mission: conquering the hearts of wine lovers around the world. Not only will they use the allure of a glass of wine, but also the power of a glorious past, presenting themselves to the world through the tale of the unique history of their wines, in addition to their undisputed quality. The joint activities will begin in the United States, and one cannot help but acknowledge that the two Tuscan wines have quite a history to tell. Both, for example, were loved by Pope Farnese the Third, the one who created the Council of Trento in 1545 - to the point that according to His Holiness' own wine caretaker, Sante Lancerio, "the wine from Montepulciano is as perfect as both summer and winter, and His Holiness drinks it with pleasure", as one can read in his manuscript, "On the Quality of Wine". Regarding the dry white, furthermore, Lancerio wrote that "after his departure from Rome in the year 1536, he stayed in Poggibonsi, where there were many wines from San Gimignano (...) and some delightful Vernaccias as well, and of these, the Pope drank a lot, honouring the place". And this is only one quote, from a myriad of examples: the earliest written records of the existence of Vernaccia date all the way back to the 1200s. And, during the 1300s, it was quoted in Dante's Divine Comedy and in the writings of Boccaccio and Cecco Angiolieri, as well as in the works of French and British writers like Eustache Deschamps, one of the fathers of the ballad, or Geoffrey Chaucer, the author of the "Canterbury Tales". Or, moreover, the satyr drinking Vernaccia depicted in the fresco in the Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, authored by Vasari; or the verses of Francesco Redi, who, in his "Bacchus in Tuscany", curses those who do not like it. Redi also wrote, regarding the Tuscan red, that "Montepulciano is king of all wines". Going forward in time, Voltaire also mentioned it, with the "Nobile" moniker recorded as far back as 1787. A veritable twin cornucopia of history, joining forces to narrate each other.

## Focus

### Forecasts, high costs for the 2014 harvest

Some wine firms have already begun the harvest, like in Sicily and in Franciacorta, but the lion's share of the harvest is yet to come, and forecasts abound. According to Regional agency Veneto Agricoltura, which has summed up the top regions of the Northeast, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Trentino Alto Adige, experts say that quantity will drop 5 to 10% compared to last year. This is mainly due to less fertile buds, to hailstorms and to less than perfect sanitary conditions, especially for those early varieties that are about to be harvested, but acidity will be higher, and that is good news for sparklings. The harvest proper will begin in the second half of August, and even if winemakers have done their best in the vineyards, quality-wise, forecasts say that there will be average aromas and sugar content. Piedmont, on the other hand, one of Italy's top winemaking regions, will start on the 25th for Pinot and Chardonnay grapes, and will go on until October for Nebbiolo grapes. It will be a costly harvest there, according to farmers association Confagricoltura: "expenses have gone up 30 to 40%, due to actions taken against heavy rains and fungal diseases, like late blight".



A CAMPAIGN FINANCED  
ACCORDING TO  
EC REGULATION  
N. 1234/2007



## Wine & Food

### Italian wine goes to the Caribbean on MSC Cruises

Some of the most prestigious Italian wines, authored by the likes of Antinori, Santa Margherita, Feudi San Gregorio, Mastroberardino, Col d'Orcia, Castello Banfi, Fontanafredda and many others, will be the focus of tastings, seminars, training initiatives and quizzes aboard the "MSC Divina", which has recently set sail from Miami, Florida, in order to cruise the Caribbean Islands until August the 30th. The initiative, which aims to marry the pleasure of cruising with that of quality wines, was created in collaboration with the Italian Wine & Food Institute, led by Lucio Caputo.

## For the record

### Italy has one of the world's best bartenders

Claudio Perinelli, Italy's very best mixologist, has been recently named one of the 6 best bartenders in the world by the Diageo Reserve World Class Bartender of the Year 2014.

Perinelli has been able to be best over 18.000 opponents from around the world. Charles Joly, of The Aviary bar in Chicago, is number one.

