



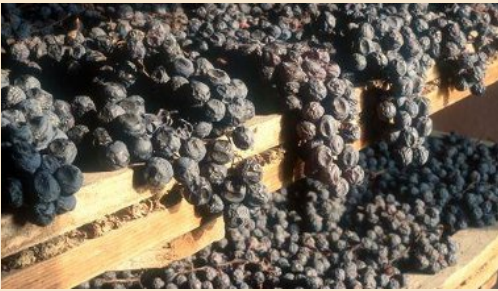
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# Italian Weekly Wine News.it



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## News



### A record 2011 for Amarone, as 2008's vintage comes up

2011's weather pattern, both in grape ripening and in grape withering phases, immediately made experts think of a great vintage for the Venetian Amarone, and now, after crushing, comes the first confirmation of a vintage comparable to 1988 and 1997 - "Top Ten" one. Such is the opinion of Famiglie dell'Amarone, the association of the 12 historic families of Valpolicella. It will take a few years to be sure of it though. In the meantime, the Consortium's "Amarone 2008 Preview" is in store for true aficionados (in Verona, on Jan. 28th-29th).



SMS

### A matter of rating

Rating agencies are in everyone's crosshairs, for reasons that can be shared or not. It would be nice, in any case, to know what they rate, exactly, because in the day-to-day humdrum - even in the world of wine - one can find out that the "Country system" is made up of realities that keep very different paces. On one hand there are serious and efficient businesses, winemakers whose initials are "A", "B" and "G" - not to name names - that, for example, impeccably pay their dues in 20-40 days. On the other hand, there's a State (and a Ministry for Agricultural Policies) that helps businesses and authorities for a boatload of events and undertakings, but pay after 24 months or more. If the two could be rated, then, one would get the fabled AAA, the other probably not even a D...

## Report

### Basf withdraws from Europe

Europe has never had a good opinion of genetically modified organism crops: 61% of its citizens state that they are "strongly against" foods that have been genetically modified. A figure that German conglomerate Basf didn't fail to notice, since it has decided to leave Europe altogether. A goodbye hailed by Coldiretti, one of Italy's main farmers' associations, which commented that "Gmo crops push toward a standardized development model, one that cannot be applied to the European model".



## First Page

### Great news for Italian wine from exports in 2011

4 billion Euros in value, 14% more than 2010: this is the record figure of Italian wine exports in 2011, the year the crisis came back, making it the single most important sector of national food exports. The data, analyzed by Coldiretti, one of Italy's main farmers' associations, comes from an evaluation of foreign commerce's results conducted by Istat, Italy's Institute of Statistics, for the first 9 months of 2011. And if the U.S. - where exports grew 17% in value over 2010 - represents roughly a fourth of the business, Germany remains the leader country in the EU, with a 13% growth that makes it the destination of 50% of all Italian bottles that go beyond the borders. Great performances also come from Asian countries, with China in the lead, where exports almost doubled (+87%). The nationwide result has been confirmed by the sentiment of some of Italy's most important Consortiums. "We don't have any definitive data yet," Andrea Ferrero, head of the Barolo Barbaresco Alba Langhe Roero Consortium, told Winenews, "but exports, which is where 60 to 70% of our total production goes, mainly for Barolo and Barbaresco, went well, and we have good signals for 2012 as well, since data on wine bottling is growing at a two-figure rate". "80% of our production goes abroad," Olga Bussinello, President of the Consortium of Valpolicella wines, explains, "with great results, particularly for Amarone. And on the plus side, smaller and younger producers are also able to put a foot in the door in Asian or East European markets now". "2011's exports have supposedly gone well, growing compared to 2010," says Stefano Campatelli, head of the Brunello di Montalcino Consortium, "and 2012 seems to have begun on a good note". "We are at 78% of production as far as exports are concerned, and if we grew even in 2011, we owe it precisely to that", quips Giuseppe Liberatore, Manager of the Chianti Classico Consortium. And according to Paolo Solini, Manager of the Consortium of Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, good tidings are in store for them as well: "2011 was a very good year, even if not a record one, and exports have reached noteworthy figures". Cheers!

## Focus

### Are Tuscany's wines in a bind? Not so fast...

At least for quality wines, Tuscany's brands are not in dire straits at all, especially abroad. Exports of the region's wines in the first 9 months of 2011 grew 13.5% in value over 2010, reaching 323 million Euros - therefore surpassing pre-crisis levels. So says a report from Toscana Promozione, the regional agency for the promotion of Tuscan excellencies in the world: an important signal for a territory that boasts some of Italy's most eminent guarantees of origin, from Brunello di Montalcino to Chianti Classico and Nobile di Montepulciano, not to mention Bolgheri, on the southern coast, where "legendary" wines such as Sassicaia are produced, Morellino di Scansano, San Gimignano's Vernaccia, Chianti and so on. Reds (+13.8%) and whites (+9.7%) both grew in value as well as in quantity (+13.4%). Tuscany's first customer is still the U.S., with 96 million Euros' worth of bottles in the first 9 months of 2011, followed by Germany (55.3 millions, +0.3%) and Canada (26.6 millions, +2.3%). Great performances came for Japan - where exports have tripled in value to 8.7 millions - China (+40.6%) and Hong Kong (+51.6%).



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## Wine & Food

### Denominations now a European matter, as dictated by the Cmo

73 Docg (denomination of controlled and guaranteed origin), 330 Doc (denomination of controlled origin) and 118 Igt (indication of geographical origin): here is Italian wine's Id, according to the "30-11-2011 Ministerial Decree", including the changes to the Denominations and their case files, forwarded to the EU for the "handover" dictated by the wine Common Market Organization. From 2012, the EU will manage controls of all member states. "A demanding task, completed on time and without risks for the denominations", says Andrea Squarcia, Italy's Minister for Agricultural Policies.

## For the record

### SaiAgricola's 5.000 hectares to change hands?

The Ligresti family's Fondiaria Sai Company, owner of the SaiAgricola agricultural firm, will soon change hands, rumours say - with financial group Unipol as a likely buyer. The

firm owns estates in some of Italy's best terroirs, like Montepulciano, Montalcino and Pisa in Tuscany, Montefalco in Umbria and Langhe in Piedmont.

