



OperaWine
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Italian Weekly Wine News.it



Issue 160 - Sept. 8th-13th, 2014 - Expressly for wine lovers, professionals and opinion leaders the world over
Registration number 709, Courthouse of Siena, March 31st, 2001 - Editor-in-chief: Alessandro Regoli

News



The Assoenologi forecast

The 2014 harvest is still in its infancy, and according to the first forecasts of the Italian oenologists association, Assoenologi, it should output around 41 to 42 million hectoliters of wines and musts overall - which is 13.5% less than last year's harvest. Italy is basically cut in three very distinct parts: in the North production has dropped 10 to 15% over 2013, and in the Center, it grew 5 to 10% year-over-year. In the South, production has dropped heavily, up to 30% less year-over-year in places like Sicily. Veneto, with 7.8 million hectoliters, is the most productive region of them all, and the vintage will be good overall, but with few excellent results - and Sicily is among them.



Undervalued Supertuscans

Due to the "fall from grace" of Bordeaux, whose quotations on the fine wines market have been dropping steadily, the field has cleared not only for Burgundy, but for Supertuscans as well. The reason behind this is simple, Alex Canneti, Off Trade and National Accounts Director of British wine merchant Berkman Wine Cellars, told "The Drinks Business" magazine, "with wines of Bordeaux increasingly losing ground, collectors and aficionados have learned to turn an eye towards Italy, where one can find truly great wines, sometimes superior to those of Bordeaux, like Ornellaia, Sassicaia and Tignanello, with more stable, more realistic and more affordable prices - and, I would go so far as to say that they are abundantly undervalued, compared to the great wines of France".

Report

No "Food Ed" in Italy

Even after the Renzi government reform plan, Italian schools will not see a "Food Education" course anytime soon. According to Professor Andrea Segrè, who is working closely with the government and the Ministry for the Environment, this is a priority. "The reform plan mentions obesity, which is an issue for kids aged 5 to 17, especially, but a more comprehensive educational programme is needed. The solution cannot simply be more PE, or programmes created by non-governmental institutions".



CONSORZIO PROMOZIONE
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First Page

"Less business, more culture for the 2015 Expo"

The spotlight is on the upcoming Expo in Milan, and especially on the commercial opportunities that this event will give to Italian agrifood producers. However, one should never forget that the real theme of the Expo is "Feeding the Planet": an historical and cultural challenge that has much to do with the food experience of the "Belpaese" - which has its foundations in centuries past. This is the opinion of Massimo Montanari, Professor at the University of Bologna and one of the world's foremost experts on food culture. "I think that the Expo", Montanari told WineNews, "has generated a lot of misunderstanding. The mission, from a content point of view, for Milan and Italy, upon being chosen for the exposition entails opening a discussion on how to feed the planet: a social history topic which deals with the future of humanity. Then there's the more close minded point of view, that sees it as a mere shop-window for "Made in Italy" products, and it is clear that these two things do not go well together. Or rather, they could, if one interprets Italian food culture not in a simple-minded way and not as a chance to just peddle our goods, but a cultural reflection, which asks what is the meaning of Italian cuisine from an historical point of view. I believe that the richness of our food culture resides in its variety, which in turn was born out of a very diverse environment and out of an extraordinarily rich history, where different cultures have met and the tales of different peoples have piled on top of each other. The Expo has a lot to do with all this, at least ideally, in the sense that facing the theme of feeding the planet means not so much feeding others, but learning how to feed oneself. And it is also spreading among different cultures awareness of the fact that feeding oneself well depends on how much one can control the resources of one's territory. This might all sound a bit utopic, and of course this point of view clashes with the mechanisms and the necessities of our industry, but there is a very interesting line of reasoning behind it regarding the theme the Expo: we should learn how to use our resources, without waiting for someone to just gift them to us".

Focus

"Operation Brunello" thwarts fraud

Acting on a warning from the Consortium of Brunello di Montalcino, Italian financial police Guardia di Finanza and the prosecutor's office have uncovered a large-scale fraud of Brunello and Rosso Denominations, leading to the seizure of over 165.000 litres of wine (75.620 bottles of Brunello and 89.847 bottles of Rosso), valued at over 1 million Euros. The mastermind of the fraud was A.L., a consultant for more than one winemaker in Montalcino. Through the trust gained in his many years of work in the area and with the Consortium itself, he was able to sell low-quality wine as Brunello and Rosso during the years 2011-2013, illegally using legal seals and proofs of quality - thus flawlessly "camouflaging" the low-quality wine. According to Luca Albertario, Commanding Officer of the Guardia di Finanza of Siena, "the name of the culprit has been withheld for now, as well as those of the winemakers he worked for, and that are victims of this fraud. More news will come in the next few months". The Consortium has already stated that it will bring a civil action against the consultant in the upcoming criminal trial, and the Regional Authority of Tuscany has stated that it will do the same.



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N. 1234/2007



Wine & Food

Bertani, Dal Forno follow the example of Biondi Santi

At the end of the 19th century Ferruccio Biondi Santi demonstrated that Brunello and Riservas were to be made only during the best vintages, and in less-than-optimal ones, production should focus entirely on Rosso di Montalcino. And that lesson echoes in the recent choices of some "enlightened" vintners from Valpolicella, like Bertani and Dal Forno, who have said they will not make their top-tier Amarone this year due to the uncertain results of the harvest. Biondi Santi itself, furthermore, has added that it will not create a 2014 vintage of its Riserva.

For the record

Farinetti's Eataly on its way to Paris

Eataly, the retail chain founded by Oscar Farinetti and focusing on quality Italian wine & food products, should soon open a 64.000 square foot store in the heart of Paris, at

Marais, a stone's throw from the city's Town Hall, the Hotel de Ville, according to a recent article that has appeared in the French newspaper "Le Figaro".

