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News



Italy's best for "Wine & Spirits"

Antinori, Bisol, Elvio Cogno, Badia a Coltibuono, Le Macchiole, Le Ragnaie, Pecchenino and Tenuta San Guido: these are the very best names of Italian wine according to the "Wine & Spirits 2015 Wineries of the Year" ranking, which comprised 100 of the most important wineries of the world whose grades, as assigned by the critics of "Wine & Spirits" magazine (a very important publication, particularly for wine professionals) reached to the stars, so to speak. These, together with brands such as Penfolds, Concha y Toro, Krug and Luis Jadot, just to name a few, will feature in a grand tasting which will take place next Oct. 21st in San Francisco, and whose earnings will be given to charity.



SMS

Checks and simplification

Italy is the country where the most routine checks on wine & food production are carried out: they have been more than 60.000 in the first 8 months of 2014 alone. An endeavour that has been recognized by the European Union as well, but, as Italian Minister for Agriculture Maurizio Martina told WineNews, "we must make life easier for businesses and firms". But how? "By working on two fronts: on the one hand, we must work even better on the side of checks, in order to guarantee both to consumers and to producers a complete security, and on the other, we must make the relationship between private businesses and the public sector easier. Our next concrete goal", the Minister added, "is to create the Unified Logbook of Checks".

Report

EU okays enrichments

Some Italian Regional Authorities, like the ones of Tuscany and Sardinia, have made their move already in this sense, but now, the Italian Minister for Agriculture has publicly stated that the European Union has given its thumbs-up to the enrichment of 0.5% of alcohol for the wines of the 2014 harvest, also for Regions like Veneto, Piedmont, Lombardy, Friuli Venezia Giulia and Emilia Romagna - all due to "exceptionally adverse weather conditions".



CONSORZIO PROMOZIONE
CARIGNANO DEL SULCIS



First Page

The latest news on the 2014 harvest

The fact that this harvest's numbers are down to 41 million hectoliters, or 15% less than 2013, is a fact. "But to say that Italy will not produce good quality wines, or that there are not going to be any excellent ones, seems to me like a wrong thing to say, because if it is true that such a rainy summer has not shown its face in a long time, it is also true that oenologists and agronomists currently have an unprecedented quantity of tools and know-how, so I would not go that far", Domenico Zonin, at the helm of Unione Italiana Vini (UIV), told WineNews during the presentation of their latest forecasts. "It should be added that making a great wine in such an year is going to be more costly, so some margins will get shaved. But I see no troubles, market-wise, because Italian wine is still a powerful brand abroad. We have been doing good things on the promotion side of things, thanks to CMO funds. And in any case, speaking of quality, the picture is not idyllic, but it is not nightmarish either". The situation is more complex in northern Italy: Piedmont has got the best deal overall, but the next few weeks are going to be key for Nebbiolo, while things are tougher in Lombardy, with the exception of Franciacorta, and in Veneto. But good news are not lacking: Friuli Venezia Giulia might face a complex situation with its reds, but the whites are showing an interesting potential, just like in Valtellina. In the central areas of the Belpaese the situation is a bit more complex: one cannot hope for the very best regarding the Sangiovese, but some speak of some of the best Merlot and Cabernet to ever have been harvested. The southern part of Italy is doing better: Apulia has seen its share of troubles, but quality is expected to be very good for Fiano and Greco in the area of Benevento, while it is definitely going to be a marvelous vintage for Sicily, according to some first-hand opinions collected by WineNews among some of the key players, like Antinori, Zonin, Gruppo Italiano Vini, Cavit, Ruffino, Mezzacorona, Banfi, Settesoli, Marchesi di Barolo, Donnafugata and Umani Ronchi, and among oenologists like Riccardo Cotarella, Carlo Ferrini, Roberto Cipresso, Luigi Moio, Giuseppe Caviola and Valentino Ciarla.

Focus

The (forecasted) numbers of the harvest

According to the latest round of forecasts and analysis coming from ISMEA and Unione Italiana Vini, with data related to the period between the end of August and the first 10 days of September, national wine production should hover around 41 million hectoliters, a 15% drop year-over-year, considering the 48.2 millions of 2013 (but one should also take into account that that harvest was 8% higher than the average of the five years that preceded it). North Italy will be hit hard, with Piedmont dropping 8% and Veneto 17%, but the real brunt will be borne by the south, with Sicily and Apulia dropping 27% and 25%, respectively. The silver lining in this situation, are the central areas: Tuscany will grow 3%, Umbria 10% and Marche 7%, and these are the only three Regions where the plus sign will show up. "These quantitative forecasts", Ezio Castiglione, President of ISMEA, told WineNews, "are of course bound to change, depending on what happens in the next few weeks. And quality-wise, we offer no judgement". In any case, if forecasts were confirmed, Veneto will be the most productive Region, with 7.5 million hectoliters of wine and must, followed by Emilia Romagna (6.5 millions) and Sicily (5.2).



Chianti
THE WINE

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

CASTELLO DI SPESSA
CAMPAIGN FINANCED ACCORDING
TO EC REGULATION N. 1234/07



Wine & Food

Scardamaglia to become Federalimentare's new President?

According to the latest rumors intercepted by WineNews, Luigi Scardamaglia - CEO of Inalca, part of the Cremonini group, a leading firm in Europe in the meat sector - could likely become the next President of Federalimentare, the sub-chapter dedicated to food products of Italy's industrial association Confindustria, and the biggest one after the one dedicated to the engineering industry. Scardamaglia, who has been a member of the board of Federalimentare with a mandate geared towards internationalization, should officially succeed to Filippo Ferrua Magliani next September 29th.

For the record

FIS and Palazzo Chigi to join forces

Franco Ricci's Fondazione Italiana Sommelier (FIS) has signed a deal with the official residence of the Italian government, Palazzo Chigi, in order to select the wines that Prime

Minister Renzi will gift to the various Heads of State that he will visit, or be visited by. The "packages" will be made of 2-3 bottles of wine and a bottle of olive oil.

