



OperaWine
www.operawine.it

Italian Weekly Wine News.it



Issue 16 - Jan. 23rd-28th, 2012 - 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



Wine, the shiniest star of "Made in Italy" abroad

Wine is the best Ambassador for Italy in the world, and the confirmation comes from President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano himself, who during the "Italy Quality Day" - dedicated to "Made in Italy" producers that promote the Italian image, style and excellence abroad - awarded Piero Antinori (pictured above), a true standard-bearer of Italian winemaking excellence, at the helm of one of Italy's most widespread and historic brands, the prestigious 2011 "Leonardo Prize". And Oscar Farinetti, founder of Eataly, was one of the recipients of the 2011 "Leonardo Quality Italy Prize".



SMS

20.000 less businesses...

It's been a bitter 2011 for many Italian farmers: in the last year, 20.000 farm businesses have closed up shop, according to Coldiretti, one of Italy's main farmers' associations. A negative figure, only partly balanced out in some fields, such as wine, by a growth in average company surface. It's a sign that smaller farms, hard-pressed by the crisis, bureaucracy and global markets, can't make it on their own. And the present won't give the gift of peace of mind to the 845.000 Italian agricultural businesses: Imu, the new land tax, will cost them 1 billion Euros in 2012 alone - and that's a prudent estimate. P.S. Good news: the Italian Paolo di Castro was confirmed as President of the Agricultural Commission of the European Parliament. Cheers, and best wishes to him!

First Page

To each territory its own valued viticulture

It's true that nowadays, good wine is made all over the world. "But almost everything revolves around a few, widespread varieties. That's why winemaking areas with the oldest history have a "duty" to steer towards differentiation, avoiding standardization". Such is the opinion of Denis Dubourdieu, Professor of Viticulture at Bordeaux University and one of the world's leading experts on the subject, at the conference of the two "Grape Preparers" Marco Simonit and Pier Paolo Sirch, who summoned eminent names to Conegliano Valdobbiadene, in the heart of Prosecco country, for a recap of the situation on the present and future of viticulture. According to Dubourdieu, expressing the true soul of a terroir is paramount, "which in some cases is more of a curse than a blessing, because it forces one to focus on expensive, time-consuming cultivations - but that can create extraordinary wines. That's why Countries with a great tradition like Italy, France or Spain must create value, not just make wine". And value is created through vineyards that, in many cases, need a conceptual revision. Because the grapevine, which is considered an arboreal plant, "actually grows like a vine", Professor Attilio Scienza explained, "and tends toward an upward ramification, with branches and leaves high up to attract sunlight". "But in the last few decades, even though unknowingly, grapevines were too often constrained in excessive thickness", Marco Simonit added, "because when winemakers wanted fewer grapes per trunk but still an adequate quantity, they went mainly for higher density. Just like what happened with excessively invasive pruning, mainly in the largest parts of the plant, which caused serious diseases". And the way towards a Renaissance in viticulture, according to the experts, also implies gentler pruning, allowing each grapevine to develop more and in a healthier manner, but also a consideration on future vineyard densities: growing methods must not follow fashions, but zoning that must be done to understand that the ever-widespread guyot, for instance, in some areas yields worse results than pergola or alberello. To each territory its own, essentially.

Focus

Wine tourism now a mass phenomenon

Wine tourism is one of the economic centrepieces of the many Italian territories that still make a living in agriculture and wine: 5 billion Euros a year in turnover and almost 5 million wine tourists, many of which are Italian. And soon, over 300 tour operators, winery representatives, journalists and bloggers from 40 Countries will congregate in Perugia for the "International Wine Tourism Conference", the most important meeting of its kind that, thanks to the partnership with Wine Pleasures and the Italian Wine Tourism Movement (movimentoturismovino.it), will take place for the first time in Italy from Jan 30th-Feb 2nd. "Wine is ever more global", Chiara Lungarotti, President of the Wine Tourism Movement, explains, "and its promotion must follow suit, first of all by using the web and new medias". After all, 30% of all wine tourists use the Net as their reference tool for their plans, spotlighting territories such as Salento in Apulia, Umbria (with its Sagrantino di Montefalco) and Veneto, alongside "classics" like Chianti, Montalcino, Langhe, Franciacorta, and "macro-territories" like Trentino, in northern Italy, and Sicily.



Report

Growth awaits Italy's food industry in 2012

Turnover of the Italian food industry, the third most important sector in national production, will grow 2.1%, even though the industry as a whole will see almost no growth (+0.2%). The forecast comes from the Research Area of Siena's Monte dei Paschi bank: according to their report the field grew 7.5% in a year, more than the +6.1% anticipated for the industry of reference. Truck drivers' strike permitting, since every week it continues, it cuts 0.3% in value.



Wine & Food

From Starbucks to theatres, Bacchus looks for new avenues

The U.S., even considering its low per-capita consumption (less than 10 liters/year) is the biggest world consumer of wine. And there are some who are trying to further enlarge the business, exploring new avenues. The coffee behemoth Starbucks, after the success of the first experiments in the American Northwest, will soon serve wine and beer in California, Atlanta and Chicago as well. And also, there are those trying to merge the passion for movies with the passion for Bacchus: in theatres in the State of Washington one will soon be able to enjoy a flick with a glass of wine in hand.

For the record

Monti government to officially tax junk food

It seems unavoidable now: a "junk food tax" is in the Italian government's mind, with concentration of saturated fats as the distinguishing trait. Minister of

Health Renato Balduzzi recently confirmed it, calling it "a signal to all Italians: good food promotes health, and the National Health Service will get the revenue".

