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News



Google, space and Italy

Italian agrifood has sparked some "virtual" interest, judging from the latest decision from Internet behemoth Google. In 2014, Mountain View chose to promote our finest agrifood products, through the "Made in Italy: digital excellencies" project, together with the Ministry, Symbola, Unioncamere and Ca' Foscari University, by bringing five iconic landscapes to its Street View service (Langhe, Maremma, Montalcino, the plateau of Castelluccio di Norcia and its lentils and Sicily's orange groves). Furthermore, with Slow Food and Samantha Cristoforetti - the first Italian astronaut - Italian food reached outer space as well, on the International Space Station.



Auctions and investments

2014 has been a good year for wine as a long-term investment. All the Liv-Ex indexes, the benchmark for the secondary market of fine wines, have shown growth in the last five years and the areas with the highest profitability are Burgundy (44%), Rest of the World (40%) and Champagne (32%). The "Italy 100" grew 18.75%, thanks to some great performances of Italy's best wines in the "Power 100" ranking compiled by Liv-Ex and "The Drinks Business" magazine. In 2014, this ranking tipped its hat to Italy in quite the big way, with Sassicaia reaching spot number 3, up from last year's 39, Ornellaia going to 13 (from 37) and Gaja entering the ranking at 14. Masseto grew as well, going from spot 33 to number 25.

Report

Mergers, acquisitions etc.

The year just gone by has seen some notable events in the M&A department as well. The main one was a partnership between Trentodoc and Prosecco: the Lunelli group (Ferrari) acquired a 50% stake of Bisol. Vignamaggio, a historic Chianti Classico name - previously owned by the family of "Monna Lisa" - was bought by a consortium of South African entrepreneurs for 30 million Euros, and Frescobaldi entered into Chianti Classico, renting vineyards in Castello di San Donato in Perano.



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First Page

2014, the year in review for Italian wine

What does the recently departed 2014 leave to its younger sibling 2015 regarding the world of Italian agrifood? Here is our "recap", explained in detail in the 2014 edition of the WineNews "Annuario" (available on www.winenews.it). First things first: from an economic standpoint, exports have been the absolute darlings of the year. After the record reached in 2013, a new one is expected to be set once final data on 2014 becomes available. Growth will be markedly smaller than anticipated in that regard, since average growth rates have hovered around 9% since 2009 - but growth in 2014 over 2013 will most definitely not be higher than 1%, with global value going from 5.04 to 5.1 billion Euros, according to an analysis penned by Nomisma-Wine Monitor. Accolades have been abundant in 2014 for the world of Italian wine abroad nonetheless, especially regarding acknowledgement of our professionals' know-how. The legendary French producer Château d'Yquem chose the Simonit&Sirch pruning method, and Riccardo Cotarella was elected President of the Union Internationale des Œnologues (Uioe). Moreover, Italian wine can now boast the first UNESCO World Heritage site whose undisputed beauty is inextricably linked to the world of winemaking: the Piedmontese wine landscapes of Langhe-Roero and Monferrato. For the first time, furthermore, a growing method has been recognized as a Global Heritage as well: the "alberello" method of growing grapes, typical of the Sicilian island of Pantelleria. 2014 also marked the first time the world's most influential wine writers and scholars, members of the Institute of Masters of Wine, have chosen Italy (namely Florence) for their symposium, together with the Istituto Grandi Marchi led by Marchese Piero Antinori. Finally, guides and rankings: the international editions have favoured, as usual, Piedmont and Tuscany, particularly the new Gran Selezione quality tier of Chianti Classico, according to "Wine Spectator", and Barolos, for "Wine Enthusiast". Italian guides, finally, all concur on a single wine: only Bolgheri Sassicaia 2011 by Tenuta di San Guido got top marks from all of them.

Focus

2015 for Italian wine & food

2015 will come and go under the sign of the Milan Expo, the single most important event that Italy will host, where it will showcase the very best it has to offer, with agrifood front and centre. The Wine Pavilion will be curated by Vinality, and an additional one called "Cibus è Italia", by the trade association Federalimentare. Positive externalities are expected, but the Expo could also represent a worthy occasion for world leaders to frankly and effectively address man's relationship with our planet, since the main theme is "Feeding the Planet - Energies for Life". Father Ciotti, founder of the anti-mafia association Libera, Slow Food's founder Carlo Petrini and filmmaker Ermanno Olmi all hoped as much during Turin's "Salone del Gusto". Prime Minister Renzi added, "If we make Expo a success, we make Italy a success". When Renzi visited Vinality, he furthermore pointed out that the government might look more closely to the world of Italian agrifood; for example, with 3 development plans by the Ministry for Agriculture. According to Renzi, wine exports can reach 7 billion Euros in value, and exports of all wine & food products can go from 30 to 50 billion Euros in value.



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Wine & Food

Good news and enduring successes for Italian fine cuisine

2014 has been an important year for Italy's top chefs: Massimo Bottura has been confirmed the single best Italian chef on "The World's 50 Best Restaurants" ranking, confirming his 2013 podium. 8 chefs have once again received "three stars" by the "Michelin Guide". They are Bottura, Romito, Crippa, Santini, Alajmo, Feolde, Beck and the Cerea brothers. In 2014, finally, new top-quality Italian venues have opened, or announced their future opening (namely Bottura in Istanbul, Scabin in New York and Alajmo in Paris).

For the record

A new catering sector is born

2014 has marked the definitive arrival of a new segment in Italian catering. New venues have focused on fast food, street food, pizzerias, hamburger joints and more

generally, inexpensive places that serve pretty much everything. Haute cuisine is hanging in there, but the middle tier of Italian catering has been through a tough year.

