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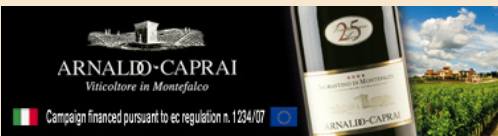
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News



A cellar in a tortoise

A tortoise-shaped sculpture, a symbol of longevity and of the union of heaven and earth, 90 feet long and 75 feet wide, the first inhabitable cellar in the world, where people live and make a great wine. It is the "Carapace" (pictured above), the first architectural work of Italian sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro, an artistic reply to the many futuristic cellars that, in recent years, were created by "archistars" such as Renzo Piano, Massimiliano Fuksas, Mario Botta, Frank Gehry or Jean Nouvel. The new sculpture-cellar in the Castelbuono Estate, the Umbrian firm of the Lunelli family where Sagrantino di Montefalco is made, was unveiled yesterday in Milan.



Barolo & Brunello in China?

What if, somewhere down the road, "BBC" were to mean not only the UK public broadcaster, but "Brunello & Barolo in China" as well, with an alliance between Italy's two most prestigious wines in order to pave the way for all Italian wines? The idea was recently voiced on the pages of the national daily newspaper "La Stampa", taking its cue from the invitation of the President of the Consortium of Brunello, Ezio Rivella, as opening speaker for the "Feeling sorry or reacting to difficulties" seminars. Not much more than a passing thought so far, the protagonists say, but it would indeed be nice, they admit. It is, after all, what the French did with their three top-tier brands (Bordeaux, Champagne and Burgundy), paving the way for lesser known wines and territories, and with undisputable results.

Report

Sommeliers go on the air

Learning the right glass for the right wine while driving, listening to the history of a peculiar bottle and of its vigneron while doing housework, or discovering the best food match for one's favourite label: what if the art of sommelierie could be learned on the radio? Apparently, this is the question that Rai, Italy's public broadcaster, and the Italian Sommeliers (Ais) have decided to answer with their joint "Lessons of sommelierie on air", which are about to start on one of Rai's national radio channels.



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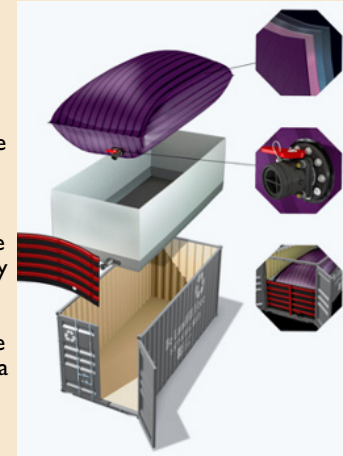
Denomination, a collective brand to which all must contribute. The case study of Chianti Classico

A landmark and a historic step is what the Consortium of Chianti Classico recently took by becoming the first Italian Consortium to adopt the new role of "erga omnes" protector, sentry and promotion vector as stated by the legislative decree 61/2010, thereby becoming by law the custodian and manager of both the Chianti Classico brand and denomination. These two elements are now acknowledged as a collective heritage and all players (winemakers, whether they are part of the consortium or not, if they represent at least 40% of vine-growers and at least 66% of all certified production of the Denomination) must help to promote and safeguard. The decision will be further explained at the upcoming "Chianti Classico Collection", the preview of the 2011, 2010 and 2009 Reserve vintages that will take place at the Leopolda Station in Florence (Feb 20th-22nd, www.chianticlassicocollection.it). The "Black Rooster" consortium currently represents 90% of the production of the entire denomination, and its yearly budget is 2 million Euros for media promotion and 200.000 Euros for brand protection. The parceling of expenses will take place according to the quantity of grapes, wine and bottles produced by each winemaker. "It is, besides the fact that we are the first Consortium for the Safeguard of Wine to tread this new ground", Giuseppe Liberatore, the Consortium Director, explains, "a landmark step for effective protection by the Consortium, and one that is guided by equity and equality. It is a revolution - a historical, democratic and ethical one. The denomination and its brand have become, to all intents and purposes, a heritage of the commons, and the Consortium makes it available to everyone". The value of a food & wine product is a blend of its (private) creator's entrepreneurial ability, but also of the (public) value of the territory it is born into and one that everyone must help build and protect.

Focus

"On tap" on the rise in exports

The export of quality "on tap" wine, to be bottled in the destination country, is back in vogue, not only for economical reasons, but also (and mainly) for its positive effects on both the environment and the quality of the product. It is indeed easy to see how, by eliminating the glass containers and transporting the same amount of wine, Co2 emission can drop 20%. It is more interesting to note how "on tap" wine, transported in huge flexitanks (pictured right), becomes more resistant to temperature shocks that sometimes end up damaging the bottled product by quickening its aging process. The fact was recently explained by a study published in "The Drink Business" magazine by oenologist Lee Winston, who takes his cue from the trend in the New World - where in 2010 the quantity of "on tap" Australian wine leaving the shores down under was 60% of all production - and sees a "back to the old days" attitude coming, at least for mid-range wines, whose profit margins are shrinking the most. But even though up until 1948 the precious Château Margaux Burgundy was shipped "on tap", it is unthinkable for fine wines to go back to those days, considering both the market and denominations.



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Wine & Food

Record France: exports of wine & spirits worth 10 billion Euros

More than 10 billion Euros: that's how much the exports of French wine & spirits were worth worldwide in 2011. The data comes from the French Federation of Wine and Spirits Exporters (Fesv). A record set mainly through a rise in prices (+10.5%) rather than volume (+2.4%). But if "Made in France" is on the rise in emerging markets, where more than one billion Euros' worth of bottles were sold in 2011, French wines still have "difficulties in taking back traditional markets" in the EU (which is still the leading market with 4.1 billion Euros), especially Germany and the United Kingdom.

For the record

"Moscato" ruling from the U.S. to Japan

The Piedmontese sweet white "Moscato" is currently on a roll in markets worldwide: a craze that currently makes it the third most loved white in the United States, and

one that sees Asti's Moscato fighting tooth and nail for the spot of top "bubbly" in Japan - against no other than Champagne itself - with 1.8 million bottles sold in 2011.

