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News



When a (empty) wine crate becomes a small garden

Giving new life to empty wine crates, letting one's imagination run loose to turn a garden or a home balcony into a true recycling cellar, in which former chests of fine wines become, with a bit of fantasy, designer window boxes, "Doc" baskets for dogs or cats, or some nice vases for a small home garden of mixed herbs, from rosemary to basil. This is the latest "urban farming", trend hailing from San Francisco but spreading fast, both in the U.S. and Italy (pictured above, a repurposed crate of Sassicaia).



SMS

We like it...

If an important and historical name like Antinori, one of the few names in Italian wine that fares well on its own two legs thanks to the strength of its brand name, decides to return to the Consortium of Chianti Classico, then a different world is truly possible. It's a good and welcome sign, one that shows that it is possible to see that unity, which all the Italian wine territories need, that makes big producers and small artisans - and both old and new names - act as one for the development of the territory (which everyone benefits from). "It is fair that a company like ours consolidate what a Consortium like Chianti Classico represents", Albiera Antinori told Winenews. In a nutshell, everyone should chip in for the common good. An idea we definitely like!

First Page

Tuscany 2011: an almost excellent harvest for Brunello, Chianti Classico, Nobile and Vernaccia

From Brunello di Montalcino to Chianti Classico and from Nobile di Montepulciano to Vernaccia di San Gimignano, the 2011 vintage is poised to become a very good one, according to the first tastings that took place during their respective previews. Starting with the one of Brunello, which took off yesterday with a 4-star score out of five (the preview will last until Feb. 27th, and can be followed at www.brunello.tv), and with the ceremony of the placement of the traditional "tile" dedicated to the vintage - signed this year by haute couture brand Ferragamo - in the town's square. A score, the Consortium explains, due to the decision to harvest the grapes 15 days before the usual date, which balanced out the effects of the heat wave that struck Tuscany last summer, thus maintaining a high level of quality. Same rating (4 stars out of 5) for Nobile di Montepulciano, which had a close to excellent 2011 vintage, one that confirms "the top-level quality winemaking vocation of this hilly territory, according to the evaluation of the technical committee, made up of oenologists and consumer representatives", said the Consortium. "Despite the torrid heat of late August, we were able to reach with the right countermeasures a high quality with good colour intensity, quite smooth tannins and well-developed aromas". And, in spite of the great heat wave of last summer, 2011 has been a very good harvest for Chianti Classico as well: the vineyards of the "Black Rooster", as the Consortium explained, held up well, thanks to a unique terroir, made of clay hills that functioned as a perfect water reservoir, "protecting" the Sangiovese. Such is the status quo of Tuscany's great reds, but Vernaccia di San Gimignano - the Region's most popular white, and the only one "sung" by Dante in his "Divine Comedy" - also took tasters by surprise with its high quality 2011 vintage, with its nice salty tone that amplifies both ease of consumption and taste, a definitely beneficial signature style.

Focus

Google is in love with Italian cuisine: the "Cesarine" go to Mountain View

Google, the behemoth of Internet behemoths, has fallen in love with traditional Italian cuisine: the big G's headquarters in Mountain View, California, will soon host the "Cesarine" - the Emilian women who safeguard the recipes of traditional dishes such as tagliatelle, lasagne, tortellini and ragout - so they can get some of their cooking lessons online as part of their "Home Food" tour (www.homefood.it), which will take place from March 10th to April 5th and will see the "Cesarine" in the spotlight in New York as well. An event that shows once again how much Americans love Italian cuisine, "the most widespread and loved ethical cuisine in the States", as Lidia Bastianich, the most famous Italo-American chef in the U.S. told Winenews. And who knows, maybe even Google's daily homage to anniversaries, birthdays and special events, its homepage's "doodle", might become a collection of the various types of homemade pasta. It would really be a great publicity stunt for "Made in Italy" in its entirety.



Report

Italians: less wine, more booze

The relationship between Italians and alcohol has gone through a revolution in the last 10 years, with the traditional Mediterranean consumption, of wine, falling behind in favour of the much more dangerous binge drinking, especially hard liquors and shots. To the point that 8.6 million Italians now risk pathologies related to alcohol abuse, and the number of hospitalizations is up 10%: the warning comes from the Ministry of Health's yearly report to the Italian Parliament.

Wine & Food

Less alcohol, more ethics on foreign consumers' wishlist

Lower alcohol content is a must to grow on foreign markets, be they traditional, like the U.S. and Germany or emergent, like China or trend-setting ones, like the UK. This is the result of a Wine Intelligence study for Prowein among 1.000 regular drinkers in the 4 markets: the ideal wine should have less than 12.5% alcohol and values such as ethical trade and environmental sustainability are important for 33% of Anglo-American drinkers, 67% German and 86% Chinese drinkers. And for more than 80% of these, the grape variety is the single deciding factor when choosing wine.

For the record

Italian wine exports over 4 billion Euros

An analysis of the first 11 months of 2011's foreign trade data by Coldiretti, one of Italy's main farmers' associations, depicts a new record for Italian wine exports: with a 13% increase over 2010, they have gone over 4 billion Euros. Half of that turnover comes from the EU, a quarter from the U.S., and exports to China grew 80%.

