



News



The European challenges

Paolo De Castro, EU MP and member of the Agriculture Commission of the European Parliament, says that something troubling is afoot for Italian wine: "all wines that are called after their grape variety, like Vermentino, run the risk of being cut from the list of protected wines, because the Commission would basically like to liberalize them". De Castro added, "we're doing all we can, but some European winemaking countries have different opinions than ours". Moreover, as UIV President Domenico Zonin pointed out, planting rights will be replaced by authorizations from 2016, and bilateral agreements might allow non-EU ones to go to China, duty-free.



SMS

Wine team-up turns one

In the wine world, teaming up can make a difference, as the new records in Italian wine & food exports amply testify. One of these team-ups, created by seven renowned Italian vintners, has turned one year old, and has celebrated its birthday in Fontanafredda. It is the Italian Signature Wines Academy (ISWA) that includes Allegrini, Caprai, Feudi di San Gregorio, Fontanafredda, Frescobaldi, Planeta and Villa Sandi. The association has shared charity projects with Oxfam, training workshops with Milan's IULM and planned new business activities both in Italy and abroad, and quality and figures are definitely on their side. Together they have more than 2.620 hectares of land, 51 million bottles of wine produced and a combined 2014 turnover of 256.5 million Euros.

Report

Veronelli's wines

The recent Bolaffi auction that included the personal wine collection of Luigi Veronelli, the godfather of all Italian wine & food critics, went very well: 922.000 Euros collected and 86% of all lots sold. All of Veronelli's wines have changed hands, for a total of 181.000 Euros, and the top lots were 11 bottles of Barolo Bruno Giacosa 1971, followed by 9 bottles of Barbaresco Santo Stefano di Neive 1964 Bruno Giacosa and by 7 bottles of Brunello di Montalcino Case Basse Soldera 1983.



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Wine Spectator's "Top 100", Italy and the U.S.

The 2015 edition of Wine Spectator's "Top 100" ranking is out, and 20 wines on the list are Italian - namely, Brunello di Montalcino 2010 Il Poggione (4), Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Vaio Armaron 2008 Serego Alighieri Masi (8), Brunello di Montalcino 2010 La Serena (13), Brunello di Montalcino 2010 Montosoli Altesino (18), Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva 2010 Carpineto (26), Brunello di Montalcino 2010 Pertimali Livio Sassetti (27), Bolgheri 2012 Volpola di Podere Sapaio (41), Brunello di Montalcino 2010 Collosorbo (43), Chianti Classico 2011 Castello d'Albola (46), Barolo 2010 Bartolo Mascarello (50), Toscana Ilatraia 2012 Brancaia (52), Toscana Il Fauno 2010 Arcanum (55), Barolo 2011 Oddero (62), Primitivo di Manduria LXXIV 2013 Feudo di Santa Croce (67), Bolgheri Superiore Guado al Tasso 2012 Antinori (71), Aglianico del Vulture 2012 D'Angelo (74), Pinot Grigio Friuli Colli Orientali 2014 Torre Rosazza (83), Etna 2013 Tenuta delle Terre Nere (87), Sicilia 2013 Zisola (89) and Nardò Nerio Riserva 2012 Schola Sarmanti (93). The ranking includes 30 American wines and 14 French, followed by Spain (10), Portugal and Australia (5), New Zealand and Chile (4), South Africa (2), Argentina (2), Austria, Germany and Greece (1). It is also a telling snapshot of the American market, that has the highest wine consumption worldwide (30.7 million hectolitres in 2014, according to OIV data) and where Italy holds a 33% share of all imported wines. Behind Italy, France has now dropped to the fourth spot, overtaken by Australia and Chile, according to data from Lucio Caputo's Italian Wine & Food Institute (www.iwfinews.com). Together with New Zealand, the two countries account for over 50% of the total U.S. market share, with Spain, Germany and Portugal going no further than 8.4%. The current Euro/Dollar exchange rate surely does not help a bit in this regard, but the import market is getting increasingly polarized nonetheless. Italy, Australia and Chile, together, hold more than 60% of the import market, and that number skyrockets to 80% in volume and 79% in value if one adds Argentina and France to the mix.

Focus

Bureaucracy hamstrings wine, culture

Wine is not only a cornerstone of food culture, but in Italy, it also protects and safeguards its native territory, including its archaeological and artistic heritage. Like the marvellous and ancient archaeological site of Selinunte and Cave di Cusa, in Sicily, right next to the Cantine Settesoli vineyards (pictured right), one of the most important winemaking cooperatives in both Sicily and the entire country. The site, as many others in Italy, is not exactly in tip-top shape, and that is why in 2014 Vito Varvaro, President of Cantine Settesoli, decided to create a "public interest" project that would have raised more than 500.000 Euros (50.000 euros out of the pockets of the cooperative itself) for the site. It was a commendable effort, but, sadly, one that has been mired in the veritable swamp of Sicilian bureaucracy. The project was approved at first, but then in got stopped by the Regional Authority, due to a series of new Council Members for Culture, and then due to the lack of a law for this kind of private support for public commons. Currently, only a direct intervention on the part of Italian Minister for Culture Dario Franceschini could quickly solve the matter.



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Wine & Food

Jancis Robinson's suggestions on wine promotion

The next edition of "wine2wine" (Dec. 2nd-3rd, Verona, www.wine2wine.net), the business forum expressly dedicated to the business of wine created by Veronafiere-Vinitaly, together with Federvini and UIV, will see renowned wine writer Jancis Robinson as its main guest star. Robinson will answer one quite pressing question, namely, "What about Italian wine promotion?" together with Silvana Ballotta, CEO of Business Strategies - but wine promotion, quite understandably, is going to be one of the main topics of the entire event.

For the record

2015 great for Italian products

Italian wine & food exports are going strong. In the first 9 months of 2015, "they've gone up 8% over 2014, to 27 billion Euros", according to Minister of Agriculture Martina, who

went on to say that "now we will tackle "Italian sounding" products and deploy a strategic promotional campaign, together with the Ministry for Economic Development".

