

News



Wine from Leopardi to Dante

Among the ancestors of today's vintners, poets abound. In Recanati, in the vineyards of Casa Leopardi, the family of the poet Conti Leopardi of San Leopardi are carrying the torch of a tradition that started at "Zibaldone" and today produces Rosso Conero, Piceno and Verdicchio Castelli di Jesi. Thanks to Masi Agricola, the Serego Alghieri family, direct descendants of Dante, have come back to Tuscany after 700 years, to Poderi del Bello Ovile. They produce an IGT red called "Bello Ovile", the same name the poet called Florence, next to Amarone and Valpolicella, in the "Possessioni" his son Pietro (who had followed his father in exile) acquired in Veneto in 1353.



The Brunello foundation

The Brunello Foundation is now a reality. The assembly of local winemakers has pledged to self-tax themselves for 1-2 cents per bottle (150 to 200.000 Euros), in order to finance projects and ideas that can promote and grow the area of Montalcino. The initiative, according to Fabrizio Bindocci and Bernardo Losappio, President and Vice President of the Consortium of Brunello, "highlights a new role for consortiums, since they're becoming promoters of the growth of a territory. With the value of its brand, which is one of the strongest in the world, the land of Brunello could create a landmark example for other denominations of Italian wine, in order to become a sort of "bank" for their respective territories. It is an innovative model, since the added value of Brunello is staying here".

Report

"Forget the French!"

Jancis Robinson, one of the world's most important wine writers, commented the recent public exchange of opinions between France's and Italy's Prime Ministers on their countries' wine productions, via her blog and a column in the "Financial Times", by exhorting Italians to just "forget the French". In her opinion, Italian winemakers should stop comparing themselves to their French colleagues at every step: she considers this a mistake, because "they have enough to be proud about on their own".



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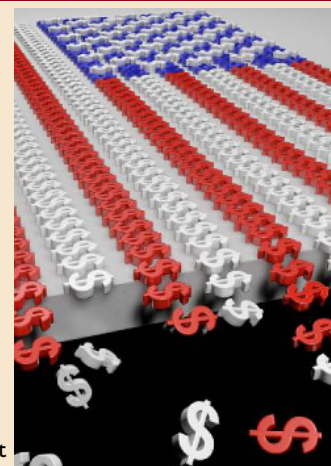
The eminent ancestors of Italian winemakers

Wine has inspired much history, art, music, cinema and literature. And today, many descendants of the great protagonists of these crafts are winemakers, as this WineNews tour in their family trees demonstrates. Gaddo della Gherardesca, one of the most famous personalities in Italian wine, is the descendant of one of the sons of Count Ugolino in Dante's "Divine Comedy": 37 generations, and their home is the Castle of Castagneto, in Castagneto Carducci. The Guicciardini Strozzi family are the historic producers of Vernaccia di San Gimignano on their estates, and among their ancestors there are the Gioconda, Filippo Strozzi and Winston Churchill. They are descendants of Francesco Guicciardini, the one for whom Niccolò Macchiavelli started his political career. In the family tree of Marchesi de' Frescobaldi there is Girolamo Frescobaldi, one of the most famous European baroque music composers. Amerigo Antinori, a Renaissance warmonger more than a wine merchant, is one of Marchesi Antinori's most famous ancestors and is depicted in a famous portrait by Pontormo. The apotheosis of the Principe Corsini family (Villa Le Corti in Chianti Classico) was the election of Lorenzo Corsini to Pope Clemente the 12th, founder of the Capitoline Museums. Among the ancestors of the Mazzei family, of Castello di Fonterutoli, there is Filippo Mazzei, personal friend of Washington, Franklin and Jefferson, who asked him to experiment vine growing in Virginia, while also participating in the Civil War and the drafting of the United States Constitution. One cannot help but mention Castello di Brolio, where the "Iron Baron" Bettino Ricasoli, one of the key figures of the Italian Risorgimento, wrote the formula for Chianti Classico, or Castello Sonnino in Chianti, home of Sidney Sonnino; both still held by their families. Just like Poderi Luigi Einaudi, in Langhe, of President of the Republic Luigi Einaudi. Then comes cinema. Filmmaker and director Italo Zingarelli founded Rocca delle Macie, in Chianti Classico or Ugo Tognazzi, La Tognazza Amata in Velletri, where today his son Gianmarco makes wines named after one of his father's characters.

Focus

Italy, premiumisation and the U.S.

In the States, the most important wine market in the world, Italy holds 31.2% market share in value and 24.5% share in volume, according to the Italian Wine & Food Institute. 2016 has started well; quantity is up 31.5% and value is up 15.3% in the first two months over 2015. Furthermore, according to the "Top Imported Premium Wines" report by Impact Databank, if one considers bottles priced 10 dollars and over, 5 out of the top 10 brands are connected to Italy. Starting with the top dog, Stella Rossa of Riboly Family Wine Estates (1.020.000 crates of Italian wines imported in 2015), followed by Kim Crawford of Constellation Brands group (955.000), the Argentinean Alamos of E. & J. Gallo Winery (900.000), Ruffino - another Constellation Brands property - at 855.000, Gruppo Santa Margherita (670.000), Ecco Domani, imported by Gallo Winery (665.000), and then two New Zealanders, Oyster Bay (imported by Deleat USA Inc.) at 629.000 and Nobile (Constellation Brands) at 560.000. Then comes Roscato, imported by Palm Bay International, at 507.000 crates (and a record 44.9% growth over 2014), and Layer Cake, a multi-national line imported by One True Wine (447.000).



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MONTEFALCO SAGRANTINO



Wine & Food

3.000 more hectares of vineyards for Prosecco DOC

The assembly of the Consortium of Prosecco DOC has recently approved the creation of no less than 3.000 extra hectares of vineyards, with the new cap reaching 23.250 hectares (at the moment, there are 16.500 in Veneto and 3.750 in Friuli Venezia Giulia). The 3.000 extra hectares, the Consortium pointed out, will be divided proportionally (by the end of next year) between Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia, and the increased output will be split equally between old producers and young ones, particularly favouring organic productions.

For the record

Martina, Italy's most admired Minister

According to a series of recent surveys conducted by Istituto Piepoli, Italian Minister of Agriculture Maurizio Martina is the most admired among the Ministers of the

Renzi government, at 54% of preferences, followed by Minister of Culture Dario Franceschini and Minister of Transportation Graziano Delrio (both at 53%).

