

News



“L'Espresso”'s very best chefs

Massimo Bottura (“Osteria Francescana”, Modena), Enrico Crippa (“Piazza Duomo”, Alba), Massimiliano Alajmo (“Le Calandre”, Rubano), Mauro Uliassi (“Uliassi”, Senigallia) and Niko Romito (“Reale”, Castel di Sangro) are the five chefs that have been awarded the top marks of the 2017 edition of the “I Ristoranti d'Italia” guide, by “L'Espresso” publishing group. After the perfect score awarded to Bottura last year (20/20) the team has opted for a “tiered” grade system, with 1 to 5 chef hats: according to Enzo Vizzari, the guide's Director, “it is a fact that Italian cuisine has never been better, and we have reworked our system to put the top of the pyramid in the spotlight”.



Obama's homage

The last State dinner of US President Barack Obama was a sort of “homage” to Italy as a whole, with an Italo-American chef (Mario Batali), Italian-inspired dishes and Californian wines, but made using traditional Italian varieties such as Sangiovese and Vermentino. And it was also a confirmation of the deep love that the States have for Italian cuisine, wine and food, considering the fact that the US are our first foreign market for wine and one of the most important for our food products. In all probability, then, this homage of President Obama will further strengthen this tie, if one considers the fact that President Obama, together with his wife Michelle, has publicly stated his admiration and passion for Italy, to the point that he called himself an “honorary Italian”.

Report

Sagrantino and the “Giro”

The “Giro d'Italia”, one of the world's most fascinating and famous bicycle competitions, has doubled down on its ties with wine territories, with its 100th edition, which is almost certainly going to feature a time trial in the territory of Sagrantino, Umbria's most famous wine. The trial should start in Foligno and end right in the main square of Montefalco, the capital of the wine district of Sagrantino, whose global “rebirth” is due to the efforts of renowned winemaker Arlando Caprai.



First Page

New ranking, appeals for EU CMO funds

Right when, according to State agency AGEA, everything was supposed to be ready for the closing of the contracts for projects regarding promotion initiatives in non-EU countries funded with the national share (30 million euros) of the Italian quota of EU CMO funds - the remaining 70 are handled by Regional Authorities - the Ministry of Agriculture has published last week a new ranking, which to all intents and purposes dismantles the old one, dated last July, in a manner that will surely not go uncommented (after the appeals of the last months, the minutes of the Evaluation Committee were published last Oct. 12th-13th). And, out of 26 projects that were approved at first (moreover, according to an announcement that the ministry itself published very late, and after an extenuating negotiation with all actors of the wine sector), 18 receiving funds and 8 deemed as worthy of them, only 10 remain, all financed, half of those belonging to subjects that were admitted but for whom, initially, there were no resources. Therefore, the total sum for promotional initiatives (which are vital for Italian wine, since its growth is tied to exports) dropped from 30 million to 13 (with the financing for each project that cannot go beyond 50% of the total): a big question mark hangs over the remaining 17, and rumors say they could be used for other CMO measures. The Ministry does not seem to have heeded the decision of the Regional Administrative Court, which stated that the decree would have to be abolished, after the appeals of some subjects, but also asked the Ministry to supplement the documentation with new controls no later than 60 days from Oct. 12th. In a word, it's chaos, which could and should have been avoided, and that damages not only those who submitted projects, but the entire sector of Italian wine, not to mention the image of Italian administrative authorities. And the matter is far to be settled, too, since some of the former beneficiaries have already counter-appealed this latest development (the new version of the ranking is available at <https://goo.gl/ujZexx>).

Focus

World wine production in 2016 for OIV

According to the latest estimates, global wine production in 2016, excluding juices and musts, should hover around 259.4 million hectoliters (5% down, or 1.4 million less, compared to 2015), one of the lowest yields since 2000, and for climatic reasons. Italy (48.8 million hectoliters, 2% less) is still the first global producer, followed by France (41.9 million, down 12%) and Spain (37.8 million, up 1%). Generally speaking, total EU production should be around 158.5 million hectoliters, 7.7 million less year-over-year. According to data on the subject presented this week in Paris by OIV, the International Organization of Vine and Wine, among non-EU wine producing countries, the Usa are growing fast (22.5 million hectoliters, up 2%), while Argentina (8.8 million, down 35%), Chile (10.1 million, down 21%) and Brasil (1.4 million, down 50%) have plummeted. Ditto for South Africa (9 million hectoliters, down 19%), but Australia (12.5 million, up 5%) and New Zealand (3.1 million, up 34%) have grown remarkably, close to the 2014 record. Finally, when it comes to global consumption, as of now, estimates hover between 239.7 and 246.6 million hectoliters.



Wine & Food

UK Government apparently “snubs” Italian wine

According to the latest data regarding the UK government cellar, published by British magazine “Decanter”, between 2015 and 2016, not a single bottle of “made in Italy” wine was uncorked during official occasions. It is quite the peculiar list (which excludes reception wines), with France dominating among still wines, with Burgundy and Boreaux above all, while among sparklings the UK and Wales are at the top. And even though the list includes wines from countries such as Germany, Portugal, South Africa, New Zealand, Spain, Australia, Chile and even Austria, Italy is conspicuously missing.

For the record

Italian wine exports grow in 2016, but ...

According to Antonio Rallo, President of the Observatory on Wine, “the positive trend of Q1 2016 is ongoing, but Italian wine exports are growing less: demand is

good (up 8% in value and 4.5% in volume) but sparkling still lead the charge, Prosecco above all. We can't rely on this product alone to grow”, he concluded.

