



OperaWine
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News



Gaja's "artisans of wine"

"Small producers have total control over their businesses, in a family-like environment where everyone works full time, spending 12 to 16 hundred hours a year in the vineyards. First and foremost, they protect their passion respecting, however, those who make different decisions, because small "tailors" and great producers are no enemies, but two sides of the same coin": such is the opinion of Angelo Gaja, one of Italy's most enlightened wine producers and entrepreneurs, as he stated at Vinality 2012. Gaja also said that "the communication of wine must become communication of all the excellences of a territory", like hazelnuts of his region, Piedmont.



Banks "green-light" credit

Good news for winemakers come from Italy's banks: even in a time of credit crunch and rising taxation, banks are looking favourably to Italian wine's financial results, and are "ready to green-light lines of credit to winemakers", as Unicredit's CEO, Roberto Nicasro, said during a round table discussion on the matter at Vinality 2012. "Exports are a unique opportunity", he pointed out, "but much more can be done - like in China, where Italy's 11% market share could grow". But according to Piero Modiano, president of the economic study centre Nomisma, "banks suffer from "de-specialization": they sometimes fail to see that the best-performing businesses are often the ones that need credit the most, because their production cycle is much longer".

Report

Digestible, but not on the label

Wine, if consumed wisely and with moderation, can have beneficial effects, but for the EU it is forbidden to describe them on the wine label. The European Court of Justice ruled as much regarding the case of the German cooperative, Deutsches Weintor, whose labels displayed the term "bekommlich" - "easily digestible" - in contrast with the European regulation on indications for beverages containing more than 1.2% alcohol in volume.



First Page

A "happy ending" for Italian wine at Vinality 2012

The 46th edition of Vinality depicted the world of Italian wine as a healthy and optimistic reality, even if the economic and social issues of our time are not to be underestimated. This year's edition dedicated one less day to the general public, getting the world's most important wine fair back to its true nature: making business happen, both by getting companies in touch with one another and by discussing a sector that is vital for the economy of Italy. Two important results have already been achieved: Italy will most probably force Europe to backtrack on its liberalization of planting rights and there will be no new taxes on wine. Minister for Agriculture Mario Catania pledged as much, recognizing the cultural and economic importance of this productive sector. Here are a few figures to confirm it: 14 billion Euros in turnover, more than a million workers, 300.000 businesses and 4.4 billion in foreign turnover. And, the turnover doubles if one counts the satellite industries. Vinality also confirmed its ability to internationalize businesses: both with Operawine, the first grand tasting in Europe organized by "Wine Spectator" magazine with Veronafiore, and the new partnership with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council opening Asian markets to Italian wine - not to mention the coverage of publications such as the "New York Times" and the "Herald Tribune". But two problems still linger: the drop in consumption and the difficulty in collecting dues. Even in the world of wine credit crunch and excessive taxation are two very big handicaps, but according to Unicab and Veronafiore young adults (35 and under) are ready to turn back to wine (but with a lower alcoholic content), as an environmentally sustainable product and a companion to "easy-going" foods. Finally, newfound attention to the sector by Italian institutions seems to be the best news of all: Minister Catania has been at Vinality for three days, because "agriculture is key to the country's economy, and I am aware of that". And Italian wine can only be glad of the interest that both Italy and the world have shown, with more than 140.000 people at the fair.

Focus

Wine Spectator's first time for its executive director, Thomas Matthews

Vinality is over, but for all those who attended its prologue, Operawine - the first grand tasting organized by "Wine Spectator" in Italy, together with Vinality itself - it will remain a fond memory. Thomas Matthews, executive director of the premier U.S. wine magazine, told Winenews that "in Italy there are so many top-tier producers that we had to focus on the cream of the cream, relying, for the first time outside the States, on a partner that has shown professionalism, that has been enterprising and that has shown the desire to bring Italian wine to world-wide attention". Wine lovers from across the "pond" are, after all, no newcomers to Italian wine: "you just need to come to America to understand how many aficionados Italian wine, food and culture can boast. In order to keep on being successful, we must first of all hope for an economic recovery, and producers will just have to keep on making great wines. As far as we are concerned, we will do our best to find new excellences and to bring them to the attention of the world".



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Wine & Food

"I love Verona" says Eataly's founder Oscar Farinetti

After opening stores in Turin, Milan, Bologna, Genoa, Bari, Florence, Tokyo, Rome, the world's largest (146.000 square feet, 40 product areas, 20 restaurants, 700 employees), and in New York - an homage to the "New York Times" and the third most visited place of interest in the "Big Apple" after the MET and the Empire State Building - Eataly founder Oscar Farinetti announced that a new store will open in Verona in 2014, with Veronafiore as a possible partner. The announcement was made last Tuesday at the splendid estate of Villa della Torre in Fumante, Verona, owned by the Allegrini family.

For the record

Winenews wins Grandi Cru d'Italia award

Winenews.it was awarded the "best website on wine" award by Grandi Cru d'Italia - the prestigious association of Italy's top 110 wine producers chaired by Vittorio

Frescobaldi - ex aequo with James Suckling's website. A great honour, no doubt: but the greatest prize is the interest and support that our readers give us every day.

