

News



Vivino's "Magnificent Seven"

In order to really know which 100 wines, for prestige, reviews and average price, everybody truly agrees on, there are few places better than Vivino's 17-million strong community of wine lovers across the world. And its "Top 100 popular wines" ranking, although heavily dominated by France, has 7 Italian wines in it. Namely, Tuscany definitely leads the pack, with Tenuta San Guido Bolgheri Sassicaia, at spot 13, Antinori Tignanello at 30 and Masseto (35), followed by Ornellaia Bolgheri Superiore (40), Antinori Solaia, at 54, and then two Piedmont symbols - Giacomo Conterno Barolo Riserva Monfortino (71) and Gaja Barbaresco (at 96).



Bad news from the U.S.

2016 might end up with a minus sign for Italian wine in the States. In the first 9 months imports have gone down 0.9% in volume, to 1.89 million hectolitres, and up 1.8% in value, to 989.9 million Dollars, over 2015, according to data from Lucio Caputo's Italian Wine & Food Institute. This is "a warning sign not to be underestimated", he commented. Italian wine, overall, is performing just as well, if not better, than American total imports, and Italy is still in the lead, with a 33.7% market share in value in foreign wines and a 29.2% market share in quantity. Still, for Caputo, "Italy is under pressure from Chile's lower price tiers, and the higher price tiers from France, whose offensive is unrelenting (up 8.4% in quantity, to 778.640 hectolitres, and 3.8% in value, to 680.7 million Dollars)".

Report

Wine quotations going up

The 2016 harvest has gone down compared to last year almost everywhere, and it might be the scarcest in the last 20 years (159.5 million hectolitres, OIV data). Together with a reduction in stocks for Spanish wineries (down 8% over 2015, to 31.15 million hectolitres) that export very cheap "on tap" wine, this "results in good effects on international trading places, where prices are going up already", according to Ruenza Santandrea, wine sector Coordinator of the Alliance of Italian Cooperatives.



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First Page

Barolo, Brunello and "zoning"

Barolo and Brunello are two of the top standard-bearers of Italian wine in the world, and the very best expression of two grape varieties - Nebbiolo and Sangiovese - and their respective, iconic and unmistakable territories. What sets them apart, at least symbolically, is "zoning". In Langa, it's been the subject of discussion for at least a century, since the work of Lorenzo Fantini and Vignolo Lutati, between the 19th and 20th century, all the way to the creation of crus in the appellation of Barolo in 2010, and to the map of the Barolo zones authored by Renato Ratti in 1985, as well as Masnaghetti's recently updated version. In Montalcino, on the other hand, the mapping process started by the Consortium is still in its infancy and the process is evolving slowly overall. Still, what has changed in Barolo, and what will happen in Montalcino? WineNews polled some of the winemakers of the two territories during "BaroloBrunello", and it turns out that the endeavour of Barolo has been a long and winding road, since "we've had to reach a compromise with all parties, keep the borders between all vineyards and translate them into a single label", Alessandro Cavallotto explained. Furthermore, "the differences are so great that we'll have to work a lot more", Marta Rinaldi commented. Achille Boroli, instead, said that in his opinion "this has been a fundamental process", while Mario Cordero (Vietti) thinks that "this benefits the consumer, since he has a map to find the vineyards". Fabio Alessandria (Burlotto) said, "Barolo and Brunello have a lot in common", even though, as Giuseppe Gorelli (Le Potazzine) pointed out, "Montalcino is still behind" in this regard. But there is a general will to go forward, as Conte Francesco Marone Cinzano (Col d'Orcia) pointed out: the first step is a "toponym register", that Francesco Ripaccioli also seconded, "in order to let producers know the difference between zoning and classification", and Alessandro Mori (Il Marroneto) sees the process as "an obligation". Riccardo Illy (Mastrojanni), instead, has doubts: "what will consumer take from all this information?" he mused.

Focus

No changes on the Michelin "Three Stars"

The 2017 edition of the Michelin Restaurant Guide for Italy shook no tree at its top, so to speak: "Three Stars" were awarded, once again, to Massimo Bottura ("Osteria Francescana", Modena), Niko Romito ("Reale", in Castel di Sangro), Heinz Beck ("La Pergola", Rome), Enrico Crippa ("Piazza Duomo", Alba), Giorgio Pinchiorri and Annie Féolde ("Enoteca Pinchiorri", Florence), the Santini family ("Dal Pescatore", Canneto sull'Oglio), the Alajmo bros ("Le Calandre", Rubano) and to the Cerea brothers ("Da Vittorio", Brusaporto). There are now 343 "starred" venues in Italy, in 12 different regions (294 with one, 41 with 2 and 8 with three). 33 new entries, including five new "two stars", together with 260 "Bib Gourmand" awards, giving Italy the silver medal of the most "starred" countries in the world. The news, as in past editions, is the "two stars" and "one star" tiers, with many young talents coming into the spotlight, since 10 chefs out of 33 new entries, are under 35 years old. According to Michael Ellis, International Director of the Michelin Guides, "Italian cuisine has never looked this healthy. But an acknowledgement is not forever, and our inspectors are already at work finding new stars".



Wine & Food

Record auction for white truffles in Grinzane Cavour

A new record has been reached at the "International Auction of Alba White Truffles" in Grinzane Cavour last week. 450.000 Euros for the top lot - two truffles, combined weight 1.170 grams, together with a magnum Barolo Gran Bussia 2005 Aldo Conterno and a 5-liter Barbaresco Roncaglie 2011 Poderi Colla - going to the Chinese chef Zhenxiang Dong, for no less than 100.500 Euros. The auction took place simultaneously, via teleconference, with Philadelphia and Hong Kong, thanks to 8½ Bombana, the only "three-starred" Italian restaurant abroad.

For the record

New CMO ranking in the pipeline, says Ministry

Following the recent spate appeals regarding the EU CMO wine promotion funds, which have invalidated the previous ranking, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture has

recently announced that a new ranking is upcoming in order to allocate part of the 30 million Euros (out of a total of 100 million) to be distributed nationally.

