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News



Service with a glass

Wine - or rather, the right kind of wine - can ennoble any kind of place, not only great restaurants, but the world's most prestigious hotels as well, like Starwood's Sheraton hotels, whose management has recently decided to pivot its reception around quality wine in 60% of its hotels on the five continents. The restaurants' menu will be changed according to the wines of the week, and tasting rooms will be created in every hotel, in order to let customers enjoy some great bottles, chosen according to "Wine Spectator" magazine's scores. The rules? All wines that scored under 90 points are off the premises, no matter their place of origin...



A forgotten kind of oil

Quality wine & food and the tourism that hinges on those products, are the true, if not the only, real "oil" that Italy has. But they never enjoyed the attention of the Institutions, and especially of the State, they deserve, since wine & food alone is worth 15% of the nation's GDP. And, tourism (which is in large part wine & food tourism, worth 3 to 5 billion Euros a year) is worth an additional 12% of GDP. Such is the bitter, and regrettably true, line of thought of Città del Vino's President, Pioli, as he stated during the presentation of the latest "Wine Tourism Report in Italy" in Rome. And just to give some more examples, the Government's latest spending review reportedly suggests abolishing the Ministry of Tourism altogether, instead of making it more efficient...

Report

The 2015 Expo visits Obama

Agriculture and food safety have been front and centre in the U.S. government symposium that President Barack Obama inaugurated yesterday: a good occasion to update the pledges on eradicating world hunger made at the G8 meeting in quake-ravaged L'Aquila, but also a good occasion for Roberto Formigoni, President of the Lombardy Region, to promote the Milan 2015 Expo, which has the "Millennium Development Goals" (the fight against world hunger by 2015) as one of its objectives.



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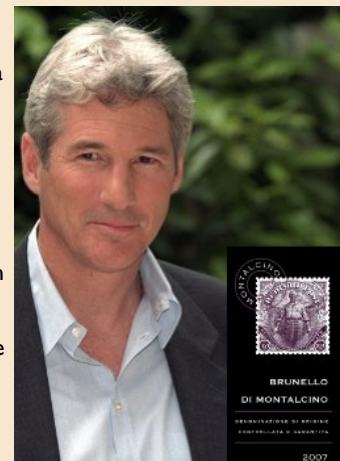
Winenews face to face with Constellation Brands

Constellation Brands is the biggest wine & spirits company in the world, both in production and commerce, with 2.6 billion U.S. dollars in turnover in 2011 and more than 100 wine and beverage brands in its portfolio, from Mondavi to Clos du Bois and from Corona Extra to Black Velvet, just to name a few. The American giant has been the sole proprietor of Ruffino for a few months now - which is one of the leading companies of Italian wine, with 14.5 million bottles in 2011 for a turnover of 56 million Euros (87% from sales abroad). And it was exactly in one of Ruffino's estates, in the heart of Chianti, that Winenews met Constellation Brands' CEO Rob Sands and its COO, Jay Wright, to have a chat about markets and on the possibilities of Italian wine in the world. Right off the bat, the two told winenews.tv that no further acquisitions are scheduled in Italy as of now, because by buying Ruffino Constellation Brands has acquired a brand that represents "Chianti, Italy and the "old world" with a multitude of labels, and we'll work on the development of existing brands". Then, the two heads of a colossus that does business in more than 100 countries voice their opinion on the future of Italian wine. Betting on indigenous grape varieties is good and proper, "but maybe the best way, right now, is to capitalize on territories and brands that are known already, riding the most important market trends for Italian wine, like Chianti, Prosecco, Moscato and Pinot Grigio in the States, for example". In the U.S., "in the last 12 months Italian wine grew 5% in value and 2.6% in volume. While France and Australia, for instance, have dropped in their market shares". A sure fire sign that the appeal of Italian wine in the States is still strong. And then there's China, the future's main market according to everyone. But is that really so? "We're convinced of it. From the 100 million cases consumed today, China will reach 250 millions in a few years. And imported wines will drive a lot of this growth. It's a great opportunity for Italy, thanks to its great reds, that dominate the market in China. And we're at work to become one of the first-tier players there through our top brands. Like Ruffino, of course".

Focus

Richard Gere's own Brunello di Montalcino

From Hollywood to Montalcino, the celebrity of celebrities of cinema - and quite the sex symbol - will soon have his own Brunello di Montalcino, as Winenews had anticipated: Richard Gere chose Tenuta San Filippo, a small but prestigious winemaker in Montalcino, for an exclusive iteration of the renowned Tuscan red wine, which will bear the brand of the Bedford Post, the magnificent Relais Châteaux owned by the "Officer and Gentleman" in upstate New York. Gere's Brunello will be Le Lucère, an elegant 2007 vintage (worth 92/100 points for Robert Parker and 96/100 for the American "Wine Spectator" magazine) which will come to the U.S. as a private limited edition label, bearing the coat of arms of the old estate that is now the Bedford Post. "The passion between the star system and the world of wine has so many examples and case histories that one could talk about it forever. This operation", says Roberto Giannelli, head of Tenuta San Filippo, "gives further value to Brunello di Montalcino as both a brand and as a territory, and is without a doubt a confirmation of how esteemed Brunello is in the U.S. right now".



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Wine & Food

Italian wine's American dream goes on and on

Besides being the leader country in value in the U.S., Italy is now the leading country in volume of imported wines there as well, with a market share that grew to 22.9% in quantity and 32.2% in value, for a total of 584.050 hectolitres that were worth 297.455 U.S. dollars to Italian winemakers. Such is the data of the first three months of 2012 coming from the Italian Wine & Food Institute headed by Lucio Caputo. An uncontested leadership for Italy, even if quantity dropped 4.3% and value 5.3% over 2011, but with a nice comeback after a rough first two months in 2012.

For the record

Eataly's biggest store is almost ready

The world's biggest Eataly retail store at the Ostiense Station's Air Terminal in Rome, is almost ready to open its doors. When June comes around, 144.000 square feet of retail

space will be ready to host 5.000 quality wine & food products for sale, 18 restaurants, 40 teaching areas and 8 classrooms, with a capacity of 20.000 visitors per day.

