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News



A toast to 40 years of fashion

For my first 40 years in the world of haute couture, a gift of wine is in order! Stefano Ricci, the Florentine stylist at the helm of one of Italy's most famous haute couture brands, is signing a special label this time: the one of his own wine, a blend created by Giorgio Pinchiorri, the man behind the historic Enoteca Pinchiorri of Florence, at the Sette Ponti Estate in Arezzo, Tuscany, owned by the Moretti family. The wine was shown last Monday at the fashion show that, for the first time in the world of haute couture, had the Medicean rooms of the Galleria degli Uffizi as a backdrop, where, during the preview of the 82nd "Pitti Uomo" show, Ricci's wine also ran the catwalk.



Farinetti for President

We are writing this a bit tongue-in-cheek, but Italian tycoon Oscar Farinetti, in a very short span of time, has been able to transform one of Italy's flagships - its wine & food products, into a true international business through his "Eataly" retail chain, creating jobs and fostering interest in and appreciation for our products to a global audience with its retail outlets - from Piedmont to Japan. And, last Thursday in Rome, the inauguration of the world's largest Italian wine & food outlet. Eataly's father has been able to seize the moment, creating that equilibrium in the productive process of Italian wine & food that can do nothing but good to the sector, prodding it towards more security and stability at all levels. So, when is he running for President for the "Wine & Food" party?

Report

Allergens on labels

Starting June 30th, allergens will have to be clearly stated on labels of all wines in the EU. After 2005's precedent on sulphites, for wines made from 2012 harvest grapes onwards, all substances coming from eggs and milk (like albumin and casein) - but not those based on gelatine leaves - will have to be indicated on the wine bottle label, but only for quantities higher than 0.25 micrograms per litre. Canada is also due to adopt a similar regulation starting August 4th.



First Page

Quality, health and territory: the future of wine

Italian wine has put a record 2011 behind it and is now wondering about the future of a production process that involves many different players: producers, consumers, establishments and distributors. Some answers can be found in the recent "Wine. Possible Futures" report, which was presented last Monday in Milan: "Italian wine is enjoying an excellent success rate, and both winemakers and consumers are currently benefiting from a very positive image", the sociologist Marilena Colussi, who wrote the report together with Duepuntozero Research, told Winenews. "There are still some discrepancies about the factors of its success, though: consumers tend to put quality at the top of the list, while people who work in the industry think about price/quality ratio first, because the economic part of production needs to be managed even better than it has been so far". The second factor that Italian wine needs to bet on are its territories, which is "the element that creates the identity of Italian wine, even if this is sometimes not understood abroad, because the idea of "Made in Italy" tends to overshadow the image of the single territories. On the other hand, these same territories sometimes find it hard to show a united front abroad, and this is a problem that needs to be fixed, since consumers abroad also need to buy a history, not just a bottle". There is an additional element that is gaining importance for a rapidly expanding market niche, health: "people are looking for products that guarantee quality and are healthy, and for producers who are transparent about what is inside a bottle, like sulphites and allergens. Wines that are made with natural methods cater to a need that will surely have success in the future, together with innovation both in the vineyards and in the cellar, provided it enhances the natural nature of wine". But the real issue is the drop in domestic consumption, "which, because of the crisis, is showing no sign of a reprise: the drop in the last years has been entirely in the catering business, one of the sectors that the crisis hit hardest. But, there are lots of places where wine should get back to centre stage, like bars and pizzerias".

Focus

2012 harvest, the yields forecast

The 2012 harvest is still a few months away, but the Consortiums of the major Italian Denominations are hard at work on yields, since smaller yields equal higher quality and a greater equilibrium between supply and demand. In Veneto's Valpolicella, yields have been lowered from 65% to 50% per hectare for Amarone and Recioto grapes, a decision that "was made unanimously", according to Consortium President Christian Marchesini. In Piedmont yields will be around the same as 2011, but as Andrea Ferrero, Director of the Barolo Barbaresco Langhe Roero Consortium, explained, "the current situation could allow us to raise them compared to what the rules of the denomination dictate"; same thing for Nobile di Montepulciano, "where a definitive decision has yet to be made", Consortium Director Paolo Solini stated. The Brunello di Montalcino Consortium will lower the yields: "we'll go from 80 quintals, dictated by denomination rules, to 60", Consortium Director Stefano Campatelli told Winenews. Sagrantino di Montefalco will do likewise: "for the 2012 harvest", Consortium executive Maresca Passeri explained, "We'll go from 80 to 70 quintals".



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Wine & Food

Italians love their pints, but never as much as wine

The passion of Italians for beer knows no crisis: after its explosion, two or three years ago, it has now spread to over 71% of Italians, while 78.6% say they are wine drinkers first and foremost, keeping wine in the top spot of the most favourite alcoholic beverages in Italy. But as renowned survey expert Renato Mannheimer, who recently studied the connection between Italians and beer, explains, "beer is the most democratic and versatile alcoholic beverage there is, there are beers for all seasons and for all occasions, with the common denominator of a generally low price tag".

For the record

An uncertain future for Italian bees

June 30th is when the temporary ban on corn curers containing neonicotinoids, one of the main culprits of the recent blights of bees, will end. Francesco Panella, President of the Italian Beekeepers Association, asked the Ministers of Health, Agriculture and Environment to reconsider, since "bees pollinate 80% of Europe's crops".

