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News



London 2012: the wines

After revealing the 18 wines to be served to the "premium" guests of the next Olympic Games, which include Banfi's Brunello di Montalcino, British wine merchant Bibendum has revealed the list of the official wines of London 2012. The surprise lies in the fact that they all come from the Southern Hemisphere: Bibendum chose South African producer Stellenrust for the white (Chenin Blanc) and the rosé (Pinotage, Shiraz and Merlot), and Brazil for the red, with Miolo's blend of Shiraz and Tempranillo. A choice that favours fair trade and environmental protection at the same time, since the wine will also be sold in completely recyclable .75 and 0.1875 tetrapaks.



Dealcoholisation?

It's been a matter of discussion for some time and has experts on different sides of the fence, but it is something that will have to be dealt with: dealcoholisation is one of the ways to solve the problem, when it is a problem, of the gradual increase of alcoholic content in wine. The International Organization of Vines and Wine recently introduced it in the official list of winemaking practices - the "Bible" of what one can or cannot do in wineries the world over - and it also introduced the definitions of "beverage made from dealcoholised wine" and "beverage made from partially dealcoholised wine". The maximum reduction allowed is 20%, through evaporation under partial vacuum, membranes and distillation. But will it be a feasible measure for those who are betting on quality and tradition?

Report

Diageo on the trading floor

The Asian wine market is a tasty morsel, and while the most important producing countries are trying to colonize it with promotional and educational actions and events, some are treading the financial road: British beverage colossus Diageo, which totaled 13 million Sterling Pounds in sales in 2011 and is on the indexes in London and New York, is apparently pondering a listing on Hong Kong's stock market as well "to facilitate its expansion in emerging markets", as "The Telegraph" recently reported.



First Page

Europe falls back, U.S. is back on track, BRICs growing: a snapshot of wine in the world

Europe keeps on falling behind and the States seem to be back to happy days, but it's the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) that are the real drivers of growth. It might read as a world economic outlook, and in a way it is, but it is an outlook on the world of wine today. Data from the International Wine & Spirits Research Institute confirm the U.S. is now the top market for consumption of still wines, with 300.6 million crates, taking the lead from Italy with 297.3 million crates, but the real major league game is on emerging markets. While there still is a great margin for growth in the U.S., with a comeback in imports in 2011, 40% of the planet's population lives in either Brazil, Russia, India or China, and their GDP is growing at an average rate of 7% each year. There are opportunities to be taken: in 2011, wine consumption grew 15% in Brazil compared to 2010, due to an ever deepening knowledge of Bacchus' nectar, but it is no easy market to conquer because of the protectionist measures that the government put into place. Russia is an easier customer, with a slower growth (+4.7% in 2011 over 2010), and one in which the "war" with beer and hard liquors has just begun: per capita consumption of wine is only 7 liters, but after the embargoes for Moldova and Georgia, it is almost all wine coming from Europe. Good for us, but a simple decision from the Kremlin could change everything. India is still a "green" market, although it grew 5% in 2011 over 2010, and is still far from becoming a benchmark one: there are many obstacles, from a small demand to consumption behaviours that still make wine a thing for "special occasions" only, and from a very high tax burden to a different culture than the Western one. The real workhorse, at the end of the day, is China, as always: with 15.53 million hectoliters of still wines consumed in 2011, and a 20.5% growth, it represents 58% of the consumption of all BRIC countries, according to data from Euromonitor.

Focus

Gourmand travelers say "USA"

Heinz Beck's "La Pergola", in Rome's Cavalieri Hilton Hotel, is the only Italian restaurant (at spot number 6, pictured at the side) in the "Top 10" list of the best establishments in the world according to the users of "Tripadvisor", the most important website for tourists and travelers (29 million users every month on www.tripadvisor.com). This is the verdict of the "Travelers Choice" initiative, with the website's users apparently favouring French cuisine wherever they happen to be, since it is the specialty of 5 out of the 10 places in the ranking. The podium positions are entirely American, with New York's "Le Bernardin", the "Ristorante Gary Danko" in San Francisco and the "Le Cirque Bellagio" in Las Vegas. More United States at spot number four, with Chicago's "Girl & The Goat". London's "Le Gavroche" is the highest European establishment, followed by "La Pergola" at spot number 6. Istanbul's "Ciya Sofrasi" is at number 7, and then it's Paris again with the "Guy Savoy" at number 8. Finally, it's back to North America for spots 9 and 10, with Montreal's "Europea" and the "Toulouse Petit Kitchen" in Seattle closing the ranking.



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Wine & Food

Italy-Spain, a match on the field and in the glass

Will the winners of the Euro 2012 Soccer Championship toast with an Italian sparkling wine, from Asti, Franciacorta, Trentodoc, Prosecco or a Spanish Cava? Tomorrow's final match has a parallel in the vineyards as well, with Sangiovese, Nebbiolo and the others against Tempranillo and Garnacha, and with Navarra's whites against those of Friuli and Alto Adige. And also, a match between two winemaking players, with Andreas Iniesta's "Bodega Iniesta" against Andera Pirlo's "Pratum Coller". A match made in heaven for both soccer fans and wine lovers!

For the record

Mozzarella certified and legal

The Consortium of DOP Buffalo Mozzarella recently held its annual meeting, for the first time on property that was owned by the camorra in Castel Volturno, Caserta,

and its members decided that a yearly "Anti-Mafia" certification will be mandatory for everyone in order to make the cheese. A bold and clear move, to be saluted.

