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News



The "wine of Polyphemus"

"Look here, Cyclops, said I, you have been eating a great deal of man's flesh, so take this and drink some wine, that you may see what kind of liquor we had on board my ship": thus spoke Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey* while giving wine to Polyphemus, in order to get him drunk and escape. But what if this wine were available today? The opportunity comes from the Villa Romana del Casale in Piazza Armerina, in Enna (Sicily), home of the mosaic, "The Vestibule of Polyphemus" (pictured above), thanks to an experiment of archeo-botanics that identified the vines used when the Villa was built, which will be used to make the closest possible wine to the "the wine of Polyphemus"...



SMS

Safe beyond a doubt

In a time rife with uncertainty and lack of opportunities, there is one sure thing: "Made in Italy" food is extraordinarily safe, as shown by the results of the 2011 National Integrated Plan of inspections on food, foodstuffs, animal health and wellbeing of the Ministry of Health; "non-compliant" food is just 1%, well below the European average. A result due to the many effective controls that are performed at every step of the productive cycle, the same ones that make "Made in Italy" food the safest in Europe. It is another feat of strength of a sector that prides itself on high quality, not only to conquer foreign markets, but to enrich our tables as well, because even in the myriad of possibilities that globalization gives us, Italian wine & food remains unique and irreplaceable.

Report

A permanent Expo in China

Italy grew 68% in volume and 99% in value in China last year, for a total of 77 million U.S. dollars. And to keep a foot in the door, the Italian pavilion of the Shanghai 2010 Expo - the most visited after the Chinese one - will become a permanent "Italian Center" with a wine section to be curated by Enoteca Italiana. It will be a true temple to Italian quality, but as Fabio Carlesi, director of Enoteca Italiana, points out, "one must strive towards the success of all Italian wines, not of a single brand or firm".



First Page

Buonitalia in liquidation, Italy up for a poor show

The evolution of the Buonitalia affair, the corporation of the Ministry for Agricultural Policies created for the promotion of "Made in Italy" wine & food products worldwide, which has been in liquidation since July 2nd, might turn into a spectacular own goal for the image of the entire country. First, because "bankruptcy", whether controlled or not, of a public company is never good for a country's "rating". Then, because the corporation is financially healthy, with more than 20 million Euros in its coffers, which cannot be spent only because the appropriate financial reporting is missing, and it would be enough to pay most of the debts, or at least those with the biggest creditors. According to various sources, VeronaFiere is owed 3.5 million Euros, the Consortium of Grana Padano is waiting for 2.8 million euros, the same amount Parmigiano Reggiano is owed, the Venice Biennale is owed 300.000 Euros and Enoteca Italiana 200.000, all for projects that have been already approved and implemented. Moreover, those who owe the lion's share of the bill are the employees of Buonitalia, since the collective layoffs are going forward, with them becoming the scapegoats of political and administrative responsibilities, since they only worked on projects approved by executives that were handpicked by the Ministry. Not to mention the fact that the Public Administration would fall short on a promise, since in the minutes of the September 2011 meeting of partners the safeguarding of employees is stated as being one of the priorities of the liquidator. It is a sour affair, and one that might damage the credibility of both the Italy of wine & food and Italy as a country. And according to rumours, the "biggest" creditors have apparently been offered a "safe haven" of part of the debt to avoid the risk of losing it all once the corporation is liquidated. An attitude that, if confirmed, would clash both with ethics and, now more than ever, with a public sector that demands an absolute compliance of payment deadlines but that often acts in a very different manner. And the only thing that might come out of the "Buonitalia" affair, at the end of the day, is the image of a "Bad Italy" that benefits nobody.

Focus

Italian wine lovers' summer wines

Aficionados are certain that wine will follow them on holiday: 100% of the sample surveyed by Winenews.it and Vinality will drink it in the summer, whether at the seaside, on a mountainside or in the city. The true winners will be territorial wines, which will replace the great classics for 70%: whites lead this "hit list", from Alto Adige to Ribolla Gialla and Friulano, from Falanghina and Greco di Tufo to Vermentino, all the way to the whites of Etna, Arneis, Timorasso and Erbaluce, Soave, Pecorino and Verdicchio. Then come sparkling wines (30%): Franciacorta in the lead, then Prosecco, Trentodoc and the "bubbles" of Asti and Alta Langa, together with Champagne; and then the reds, 21% of the sample enjoy them in the summer, too - names such as Nobile di Montepulciano, Morellino di Scansano and Chianti side by side with the reds from Etna, Sagrantino di Montefalco, Lagrein, Barbera, Grignolino and Lambrusco. And for 15%, the motto is "drink pink": rosées from Puglia and Alto Adige, Chiaretto and Cerasuolo. Furthermore, consumption will grow 10%, and 50% of the sample is willing to spend up to 250 Euros to replenish their summer stock.



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Wine & Food

Spain is Europe's champion, but it leads in fines as well

After humiliating Italy in the Euro 2012 finals, Spain has reached another record, this time a very undesirable one: the European Commission, after concluding its investigation on the Common Agricultural Policy's balance, is now demanding 323 million Euros in fines for vineyards planted without the right to do so. Spain must pay 131.3 of the 323 million Euros fine (Spain was sentenced to a 54.9 million Euros fine last February for the same reasons), while Italy must pay 98.9 millions, and Greece 21.3 millions. And France has been fined 62.9 millions for serious deficiencies in bovine control.

For the record

Wine now "by subscription" as well

For those who don't like having to go out to buy their wine, the wine e-commerce firm Design Wine (www.designwine.com) has just created the first "wine subscription"

ever: after choosing a budget, from 35 to 99 Euros a month, all that remains to do is wait for the courier to bring home the bottles selected by the firm's staff.

