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## News



### A "universal grafter"?

In the second half of the 19th century, the phylloxera insect almost wiped out all the grape varieties in Europe, and brought out the American vine, immune to it, which promptly became the root apparatus of the fruit, from Cabernet Sauvignon to Sangiovese. And another revolution might be just around the corner with the "Ager Serres" project by Attilio Scienza, Professor of Viticulture at the University of Milan: "thanks to modern molecular biology", Scienza explains, "we could collect all those elements that can help withstand all external dangers for the roots of the plant in a "universal grafter". For informations: <http://users.unimi.it/serres/dca---unito-.html>



**SMS** **First it was Vissani. Then...**  
Chef Gianfranco Vissani was one of the first to come out of his restaurant kitchen and appear on TV as a guest and a host of many cooking shows, and then a celebrity spokesperson for various products. He was harshly criticized for it. But as time went by, many "starred" chefs started dedicating less (not little, but less) time to their restaurant kitchens to get into showbiz and become consultants for other establishments and entire chains of restaurants: Bottura, Cracco, Oldani and Gordon Ramsey, just to name the most famous international names. Sometimes because they were invited, sometimes for some (well-deserved) personal satisfaction, and also because, probably, showbiz is more lucrative than haute cuisine. Which is sometimes so haute that it becomes economically untenable, all by itself...

## Report

### Nutrition in schools

Italian trade association Federalimentare and the Public Education Ministry just signed an agreement to revamp the "Taste in School" project, and introduce 1.6 million pupils to nutritional education. Daniele Rossi, GM of Federalimentare, told Winenews, "150,000 teachers will be involved, aiming to teach nutritional education from a health point of view and as part of the culture and heritage of our country". Federalimentare associates and the Ministry will fund the project.



## First Page

### Italian wine & food in London? Worth the gold

The greatest names in Italian sports and wine & food will walk together during the 2012 London Olympics, as they are two symbols of an Italy that is liked the world over. But among the many excellences that are tied to the Olympic village and games, the real surprise is how London has become a true "temple" of Italian food. Killing the cliché that "outside of Italy, eating Italian is not worth it", investments in chefs that come from Italy or that have Italian origins, are giving back the role of ambassador of "Made in Italy" to catering, together with wines (Antinori, Argiolas, Gaja, Banfi and Frescobaldi being the most commonly found names on good restaurants' wine lists, as confirmed by a recent London trip Winenews took). Here are a few examples: Daniel Boulud and Heston Blumenthal, both "starred" chefs of the luxury "Mandarin Oriental", or Massimo Riccioli's seafood cuisine at the Hotel Corinthia, but also Heinz Beck at the Lanesborough Hotel's "Apsleys" on Hyde Park, replicating its Roman success with Massimiliano Blasone in the kitchen, among the seven establishments which were awarded a Michelin Guide star, next to the famous "Locanda Locatelli" by Giorgio Locatelli, an icon of quality Italian cuisine, the "RiverCafé" and Angela Harnett's "Murano" in Mayfair. But Italy is around every corner. At the "Franco Manca" in Brixton, owner Giuseppe Mascoli enchants customers with his pizzas, and if "Pinci" is known in Milan as a bakery, in Soho it is a brasserie - and both got an Oscar as "best new cheap eats". Frescobaldi wines have their dedicated corner at Harrods, while Alain Ducasse has Angelo Ercolano from Naples, previously employed by the Iaccarino family on the peninsula of Sorrento, as his pastry chef at the "Dorchester", while at the Japanese "Roka", Matteo Duri is responsible for the wine. And then there's "Polpo", the Venetian style tavern, "Bocca di Lupo" with its capon and the pasta of Maurizio Morelli's "Latium", while at the "Dolada" in Mayfair Riccardo De Prà has bet on Slow Food-certified organic products, which can also be found at the Borough Market, one of London's most famous neighbourhood markets.

## Focus

### As harvest draws near, oenologists worry

Italy is about to be engulfed by African hot weather again, and the few days of rain did not alleviate the pangs of what is truly a drought: should August be as hot as expected, just like last year, it could spell disaster for the upcoming harvest. This is the sentiment of some of the country's most important oenologists, as collected by Winenews. "A lack of water is evident", says Riccardo Cotarella, "but it's not evenly distributed and where grapes grow on sandy soil, plants are clearly suffering from water stress, small size grapes and base leaves withering, both for early and late varieties". "I am alarmed to say the least", says Carlo Ferrini, consultant for firms such as Casanova di Neri, Castello di Fonterutoli and Tasca d'Almerita, "early vines are suffering the most, and Sangiovese, too. August will be a decisive month". Luigi Mojo, Professor of Oenology at Naples University, is a little more optimistic: "apart from some outliers, dangers for the vineyard are modest. Only those planted in unsuited soils and with varieties not used to the Mediterranean climate are really at risk. We should abandon those, like Merlot and Chardonnay, and focus more on territorial viticulture".



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## Wine & Food

### All the "Made in Italy" chefs, from Casa Italia to Casa Nike

Wine & food is "Made in Italy" in London's Olympic village: Casa Nike will have 70% of all athletes as its guests and Nicola Batavia from Turin's "L'Birichin", as chef. Piedmontese menus, and wines from other regions as well: Barolo and Barbaresco, but also Brunello. And if Banfi's Brunello represents Italy among the "Olympic" wines chosen by UK wine merchant "Bibendum", Casa Italia will have a "Great Wines Official National Team" by Maroni (Feudi di San Gregorio, Argiolas, Cavit and Carpené Malvolti) and "starred" chefs (Bottura, Spigaroli and Di Diego).

## For the record

### The challenge of 8 young architects

8 young architects from all over the world, together in a project by Milan's Domus Academy and the Consortium of Wines of Soave (isoave.com), have proposed a "challenge" to the architects of some true "cathedrals of wine", like Piano and Gehry: from July to October, they will oversee the renovation of a cellar in the Soave area.

