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News



Bottura at the top (again)

Third time's the charm: Massimo Bottura, with his Franciscana restaurant in Modena, is Italy's best chef for the third year in a row according to the "I Ristoranti d'Italia" guide by "L'Espresso", with 19.75 points out of 20. The "three hatted" platoon - the number of restaurants that scored at least 18 points - keeps on growing, and is now 23 strong, from 2012's 21. After Bottura comes Le Calandre of the Alajmo family and Heinz Beck's La Pergola at the Rome Cavalieri, with 19.5, and Vissani in Baschi, Enrico Crippa's Piazza Duomo in Alba and Uliassi in Senigallia with 19. Combal.Zero in Rivoli and Casadonna-Reale in Castel di Sangro are on the way up.



Monti, Barilla and Italy

Prime Minister Mario Monti, one of the Italian government's highest political figures, was at the inauguration of the new Barilla production plant in Rubbiano. A "Made in Italy" brand of wine & food that exists abroad as well, but that invests at home, which is newsworthy in itself in times where the word delocalization is ever more present - like in the automotive industry - because of the lack of fiscal and productive competitiveness of Italy. And those who reminded everyone of how wine & food exports overtook automotive exports in 2012 (15.2 billion Euros versus 13.2), like the Italian farmers association Coldiretti, did so rightly. Because they pointed out which "Made in Italy" has the better outlook, and the one in which Italy should invest more, in terms of money, projects and human resources.

Report

The price of success

Fake "Made in Italy" products are not the only way to rip off Italian food: Italian recipes are also being "distorted". According to a study by the Italian Academy of Cooking, 6 times out of 10 Italian cuisine recipes are executed "incorrectly" or even "carelessly", and they are "well done" only 40% of the times. This is because 47% of all chefs working in Italian restaurants are not Italian and less than 10% have been trained in Italy. Pizza is the most "distorted" dish, followed by tiramisù, lasagne and pasta al ragù.

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Bibenda's best: Antinori, Giv, Gaja, Terlan, Aldo Conterno, Vie di Romans, Tasca d'Almerita

Sicilian winemaker Tasca d'Almerita (Chardonnay 2010, Contea di Sclafani Rosso del Conte 2008 and Diamante d'Almerita 2011), the Piedmontese Angelo Gaja (Barbaresco 2009, Langhe Nebbiolo Sori Tildin 2009 and Langhe Nebbiolo Sperss 2008) and Poderi Aldo Conterno (Barolo Cicala 2008, Barolo Granbussia Riserva 2005 and Barolo Romirasco 2008), Cantina di Terlan (Alto Adige Lagrein Porphyriserva 2009, Alto Adige Terlan Chardonnay 1999 and Alto Adige Terlan Sauvignon Quarz 2010) and Vie di Romans from Friuli (Friuli Isonzo Rive Alte Sauvignon Piere 2010, Friuli Isonzo Rive Alte Sauvignon Vieris 2010 and Dut'Un 2009): these are the "big five" of the most awarded brands, with 3 "Five Bunches" apiece, by the "Duemilavini" guide of Ais-Bibenda, led by Franco Maria Ricci, of which Winenews has the exclusive preview. Among the most awarded producers, with wines from more than one cellar, Antinori is king of the hill with 5 "Five Bunches", for the Tuscan Solaia 2009, Tignanello 2009 and Bolgheri Guado al Tasso 2009, Cervaro della Sala 2010 by Castello della Sala from Umbria, and Moscato di Trani Kaloro 2010, produced by Tormaresca, from Apulia. Right on his heels comes Angelo Gaja, who has to "settle", so to speak, for four awards, also considering the "Five Bunches" conquered with its Bolgheri Camarcanda 2009, made by Ca' Marcanda, as well as Gruppo Italiano Vini (Sforzato di Valtellina Sforzato 5 Stelle 2009 Nino Negri, Lambrusco di Sorbara Secco Vigna del Cristo 2011 Cavicchioli, Aglianico del Vulture Re Manfredi 2009 Re Manfredi and Frascati Superiore Luna Mater 2011 Fontana Candida). Region-wise, Piedmont rules, with 99 "Five Bunches", and then Tuscany, 97 and Friuli, 32. These results confirm the sommeliers' preferences, which put the same regions as last year on the podium. Nation-wise, 480 "Five Bunches" were awarded, the same number as the 2012 edition of the guide.

Focus

Wine now forbidden to minors

Was it really this urgent (because a law decree is an emergency tool), after all, to prohibit wine to people under 18 years old in a country like Italy, where the material and non material culture of wine permeates every corner? Evidently it was for the current Italian Government, the same Government whose members declared, "agriculture must be supported" (and wine is its most important part). The Italian House Social Affairs Commission, while converting the Balduzzi decree into law, passed an amendment that makes it a misdemeanour to sell any kind of alcoholic beverage to people under 18 years old. Infringers will be fined up to 2.000 Euros and might be hit with a forced suspension of their business activities. Alcohol used to be prohibited for people under 16 and spirits for those under 18, but now it's all the same, be it a glass of wine or a tequila shot. So, in order to fight alcohol abuse - a problem that Italy, thanks to its wine culture, suffers from a lot less than other countries - one of Italy's most important and beautiful symbols has become collateral damage. And wine consumption in Italy has been going downhill for a long time. Is anyone in the Italian Parliament aware of all this?



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Wine & Food

An ancient Roman vineyard found in Pompeii

Grapes were without a doubt a huge part of the Roman Empire's economy. In one of its finest hours, during the first century B.C., Pompeii was literally surrounded with vineyards and just a few days ago an exciting discovery took place there. What is probably the best conserved vineyard from that era was found close to the tomb of the rich libertus Trymalchion - courtesy of the Archaeological Institute of Berlin - on a piece of land less than 350 metres from the Roman villa of Numerius Popidius Narcissus Maior, and a stone's throw (less than 50 metres) from the so-called "cartridge belt" villa.

For the record

After Sicily, Zonin goes to Apulia

After Feudo Principi di Butera in Sicily, Zonin has finished construction of its winemaking estate in Apulia, to be inaugurated today. A sterling example of how it

is possible, as it ought to be, to combine tradition and innovation, with innovative vineyard techniques going hand in hand with respect for local environment and culture.

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