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News



The Queen of wine tourism

Italy, thanks to Tuscany (among other regions), is the favourite destination of wine tourists the world over. This is the response of the 2012 Travellers' Choice Wine Destinations Awards by the famous travel website TripAdvisor. Tuscany is first among the top 5, followed by California's Sonoma County, Australia's Hunter Valley, South Africa's Stellenbosch and Argentina's Mendoza region. But in the European top 10 Umbria and Sicily are at spots 4 and 5. Winners were determined by their popularity as wine tourism destinations, considering the opinions and reviews of the travellers regarding local wine shops, restaurants, attractions and hotels.



SMS

Truffles for Unesco?

The fact that the truffle, given its taste, its aromas and its economic value (up to 4.000 Euros a kilogram), truly is a treasure is undeniable. But some want to make it something more than that: two of the Italian capitals of "tuber magnatum pico", the Tuscan San Giovanni d'Asso and the Piedmontese Alba, representing all of Italy's most important truffle territories (from Acqualagna in Marche to Norcia in Umbria and San Miniato in Tuscany), today signed a Memorandum of Understanding to officialise the candidacy of the Culture of Truffle as an "Immaterial Unesco World Heritage". And in all probability sooner or later the Commission, given enough of the truffle's aroma, just won't be able to say no...

First Page

Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2008, San Leonardo 2007, Sassicaia 2009, Grattamacco 2009: the "Fantastic Four" according to the 2013 Italian guides

Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2008 Sandrone, San Leonardo 2007 Tenuta San Leonardo, Bolgheri Sassicaia 2009 Tenuta San Guido, Bolgheri Superiore Grattamacco 2009 Grattamacco: these are the "Fantastic Four" wines that all 2013 editions of Italy's most important wine guides (L'Espresso, Gambero Rosso, Bibenda, Veronelli and Slow Food) consider to be truly great. A result that gives a snapshot of the state of the art of Italian wine, and that awards wines made with international grape varieties: the oenological ingenuity of the so-called "Supertuscans", and the elegance of the Bordeaux cut par excellence, San Leonardo, and only Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2008 Sandrone holding high the flag of the grape variety-territory duo. The results come from a cross reference of the "best of" lists, without going into detail about the evaluation methods (Vini d'Italia by Gambero Rosso has "Three Glasses"; Vini d'Italia of L'Espresso has "Five Bottles"; Veronelli uses "Three Stars"; Bibenda has "Five Grapes", and Slow wine uses "Great Wines", the best from an organoleptic point of view). And regarding Slow Wine, if one does not consider the "Great Wines", the closest benchmark to the other guides, but rather the "Slow Wines", that more closely represent the publisher's philosophy, the quartet would become a duo: the Moscato Passito di Pantelleria Ben Ryé 2010 by Donnafugata and Amarone della Valpolicella Classico 2005 by Bertani. As in previous years, a certain unevenness in evaluation methods is evident: "maybe it is time for both critics and guides", Alessandro Regoli, editor-in-chief of Winenews, commented, "to identify some common shared parameters, in order to get to a "shortlist" of at least 50 to 100 wines that, over time and for everyone, truly represent Italian wine".

Focus

An "Italian scare" for France

Even if the crisis is still holding everyone and everything in its grip, optimism rules in the world of wine sales: according to an "international barometer of wine commerce" created by the French marketing agency Sopexa from the results of a survey that counted more than 1300 distributors from 12 different countries (representing over 70% of the global market), 57% of these players still trusts in favourable winds after 2012's sales (the quota was 10 points higher in 2011), especially in Japan, Russia, Germany, Hong Kong and in the U.K., while China, Canada, Belgium, Denmark and Switzerland don't look so great anymore. But the true surprise lies in the sentiment of the distributors regarding denomination wines coming from Italy and France: 54% of them are forecasting more sales for Italy's products, and only 49% hold a similar opinion about France's. Great Britain's results, in particular, look surprising, and then some: 68% of the distributors are forecasting a true "Italian craze", and only 55% of them think the same of French wines - and China and Hong Kong also look like places where Italian labels will be able to carry their weight against the French "cousins".



Report

One more "yea", and wine will be off-limits for minors

The Italian Senate's official vote is the only thing missing for the measure that forbids people under 18 years of age to buy or order wine, to become law. Law decree number 158, to be converted with a proposal that the House approved this week, regards "urgent dispositions to promote the development of the Country through a higher safeguard of health". Still, no voices have risen from the world of Italian wine, either for or against it.

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Wine & Food

In Italy, more than 10% of all bottles sold are private labels

Private label wines are growing in Italy: according to a research conducted by the American Symphony Iri Group, presented at the recent Wine Conference of Cooperatives' association Fedagri-Concooperative, private labels in Italy now represent 8.1% of all sales in value and 14.4% in volume, according to 2011 data, and the numbers are going up for 2012. "It's a trend to watch closely", Adriano Orsi, President of Fedagri's Wine division, commented, "because it is an important resource for producers, but it can devalue brands, making them little more than bottle-fillers".

For the record

The crisis of catering (and its future)

A meeting on the future of catering recently took place in Valdobbadiene, and Winenews attended. The name of the game is change: not only because of the

economic climate, but also because clients are valuing speed and comfort more and more. And even if quality must always be the guiding star, the client, as always, is king.

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