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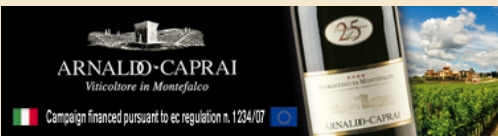
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News



A magical underwater Venissa

When your vineyard gets flooded, it's hardly a reason to celebrate - unless it happens in Venissa, the walled vineyard on the Island of Mazzorbo, in Venice, on Bisol's property. In the last few days, the high tide that flooded the Venice lagoon created a unique show, with the vineyard of Dorona, the ancient grape of the lagoon, flooded by the tide (pictured above), which reached five feet in height between the islands. "Dorona's grape vines," Gianluca Bisol explained, "looked like they were being born from the water, reflecting on the still water of the lagoon. We have never experienced such a high tide in this vineyard, ever".



SMS

"Points" of view

There's no denying the fact that the points system has helped the growth of great wines and high-quality catering. But is it still up-to-date? The question has been asked many times by critics, and by Bibenda's patron Franco Ricci as well. "How can one award one point more to wine and food? I think it is very hard to judge with a number. Close to impossible". "The chef is a human being - maybe today he's feeling good and tomorrow he'll be under the weather. And the dish changes - maybe slightly, but it does". Therefore, how can one judge with numbers? According to Ricci, a ranking would be better with no points, but with grades. "to identify a high-quality group and another, still good group, but a step below that". To each his own "point" of view.

Report

Wine's future "North star"

According to Professor Attilio Scienza, renowned expert on viticulture and one of the participants at the recent Seminar on Wine Marketing, eco-sustainability will be Italian wine's future "North star". But it is necessary "to build networks among producers with that feature in mind, breaking the contrast between "bad" producers, traditional and organic ones, which are not the "good" guys. We must take the best from each one, put it all together to make it even better and then tell the consumer".



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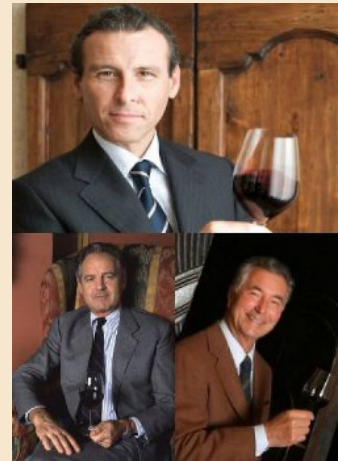
Italy's top oenologists on the 2012 harvest results

The 2012 harvest will not go down in history books, but it's definitely not been as bad as it looked like in the summer, predicting really low quantities in some regions. The talk of the town is the wines are good and pleasant, yes, but not up to challenging time. This is the first bird's eye view of the results according to some of Italy's most important oenologists, interviewed by Winenews. "Those who dared and harvested later", explained Leonardo Valenti, Professor of Viticulture at the University of Milan and consultant for many winemakers (from the Venetian Palatin to the Umbrian Caprai), "have had interesting products on their hands. Generally speaking, both whites and reds are good, but surely not great". Carlo Ferrini, winemaker for brands like Casanova di Neri and Montalcino's Castello Romitorio, Tasca d'Almerita in Sicily and San Leonardo in Trentino, is "moderately satisfied, given the situation. In some hotter zones early varieties suffered a lot, but late ones responded well, with very good results all over Italy". "We gave as good as we got", Riccardo Cotarella, one of Italy's most famous oenologists in the world, explains, "because these wines will have the features of a hot vintage, but will still be pleasant. The bitter part is still quantity, with drops between 15% and 20%, reaching 30% in some places". According to Roberto Cipresso, oenologist and consultant renowned the world over, "there is the risk that the costs sustained to treat the vineyards this year, between a cold winter and a hot summer, might not be covered by the sales", but Lorenzo Landi, oenologist and consultant of winemakers such as Lungarotti in Umbria, Rocca delle Macie in Tuscany, Fazi Battaglia in Marche and Cottanera in Sicily, says, "the wines are not bad; there are territories where things went better than expected, like Friuli, Abruzzo, the Etna area and Sardinia, but it's definitely not a historical vintage". Two up-and-coming oenologists, Fabio Mecca and Vincenzo Mercurio, consultants mostly for winemakers in Southern Italy, agree. Now the only thing to do is wait for the response of the bottles themselves, as soon as they're ready to be uncorked...

Focus

Crisis "not a problem" for big names

Italian wine's big names have been stronger than the crisis, with their 2011 turnovers all sporting a plus sign compared to 2010, according to the "Italian Main Companies" report by Mediobanca (available on mbes.it), which studies the results of some of Italy's main industrial sectors. Looking more closely at the data, the GIV-Gruppo Italiano Vini is by far on top of the ranking by turnover, closing 2011 with 368.4 million Euros (+12.4% over 2010), followed by Caviro with 246.7 million (+0.4%) and by Cantine Riunite-Civ (which controls GIV), with 161.3 million (+14.7%). Then come Cavit (151.5 million), Antinori (149.5 million), Mezzacorona (148.6%), Martini (144.3) and Zonin (124.1 million and the highest growth, +17.1% over 2010). Below 100 million Euros, but still growing compared to 2010, are the Santa Margherita group (91.3 million), Cantina di Soave (89.1), Botter (86.6), Frescobaldi (85.8), Cevico (83.1), Gancia (64.1), Banfi (61.9), Ruffino (56.7) and La Gioiosa (52.7). The best net operating margin, according to Mediobanca, belongs to Antinori, with 41.27 million Euros, and the worst to Gancia, with -2.17 million (pictured right, GIV's President Corrado Casoli, Piero Antinori and Gianni Zonin).



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Wine & Food

Italian top wine brands get American "People's Awards"

The latest "People's Voice Wine Awards" of snooth.com have been very good to Italian top brands - at least in the "value" and "premium" categories. The best sweet wine is Italian (Moscato d'Asti Castello del Poggio by Zonin) and in the "Italian" category the top white is Pinot Grigio Santa Margherita, the red is Palazzo della Torre by Allegrini and the best Tuscan is Villa Antinori Toscana Igt by Antinori, which is also top on the "value" category with its Bianco di Toscana. The top "value" red is Montepulciano d'Abruzzo by Masciarelli and the top Tuscan is Chianti Classico Castello di Gabbiano.

For the record

Farewell, Serge Renaud

The Mediterranean diet has many fathers, and one of them without a doubt was Professor Serge Renaud, who theorized the so-called "French Paradox" that linked saturated fat

and wine intake with a lower incidence of cardiovascular diseases. Renaud passed away this week, at the age of 85, in his home in Bordeaux.

