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News



Italy's top wine women

The "Top 50 Most Powerful Women in Wine" ranking by "The Drinks Business" shows no Italian flag in the top three spots: at the top there's Gina Gallo, Chief Winemaker of Gallo Family Vineyards, the world's most productive winemaker. Then comes the "queen" of the Masters of Wine, Jancis Robinson, followed by Annette Alvarez-Peters, Director of Costco, the States' biggest importing firm. As far as Italy goes, the 33-year-old Gaia Gaja, representing the brand of the "king of Barbaresco" in the world, is at number 12, and Albiera Antinori, daughter of Marquis Piero Antinori, the woman behind the startling success of the Tuscan brand in Asia, is at number 18.



SMS

Rome or Hong Kong?

The Great Crus of Italy "en primeur" and some out-of-the-ordinary lots from France were the big stars of Gelardini & Romani's last auction in 2012, which took place this week in Rome. But don't let the location fool you, because even there, the best lots went to investors from China and Hong Kong (where the most recent auction there saw 99.2% of lots sold). Speaking of numbers, the most important lot went to a wine shop in Rome: 48 bottles of Masseto 2010, sold for 22.000 Euros (+82% over the base auction price). Still, names like Solaia, Tignanello, and Pergole Torte held their own, being more sought after than Burgundy and Bordeaux, whose lots of 3 bottles of La Tâche 2001 and 3 of Château d'Yquem 2001 went for 3.495 Euros.

First Page

Christmas in the wine shop: crisis and "bubbles"

The national "spending review" knows no pauses in Italy, and Italians must come to terms with the effects of the crisis in their pockets - therefore, fewer gifts and at a lower price range. And the same goes for wine shops as well, where Christmas purchases have dropped not so much in quality as in volume. French sparkling wines are still very popular, but buyers are nonetheless very fond of the great Italian reds and - why not - of some of the more polished bottles, especially Amarone. A trend that Francesco Trimani of Enoteca Trimani in Rome, confirmed: "there's a lower turnover than in past years, but our clients are not overlooking quality. Fewer bottles are being bought, without compromising on the taste and quality of the wine. Lots of "bubbles" are being sold: non only the classical Champagne, but Franciacorta and Trentodoc as well. And for reds, this definitely seems to be the year of the Amarone". Sparkling wines and Amarone are on the way up in Palermo's Enoteca Picone as well: "sparkling wines get the lion's share of the spotlight during the festivities, but the true novelty of 2012 is the popularity of Amarone and Ripasso". Giovanni Consonni, of Milan's Enoteca Dall'Enologo, also talked about a novelty: "our clients already know what to buy because we inform them periodically of what we have in store, and we can suggest some of those wines. This way, we can always recommend good alternatives, like an excellent Friulano, a Marsala or even a Porto". Some, like Manuela Zarchello, of Turin's Enoteca Il Vinaio, pointed out that some things never change: "buyers want to be sure about their bottles, so Champagne and Piedmont reds are always a certainty". Bruno Budi, of Naples' Enoteca Sermoneta, pointed out just how much the crisis has hit Christmas sales: "our proceeds are 25% lower than usual. We mainly manage to sell wines below 10 Euros". The crisis seems to have hit "wines in the 50 to 70 Euros price range" particularly hard, according to Francesco Bonfiglio of Enoteca Piccolomini in Siena, and Andrea Formigli, of Vinoteca Al Chianti, pointed out that "last minute sales are going up: Champagne, great Tuscan reds and lots of French wines".

Focus

Culprit found in the "Soldera affair"

According to the latest news from the Courthouse in Siena, the act of vandalism that destroyed six vintages (2007-2012) of Brunello di Montalcino produced by Case Basse, the firm of the Soldera family, has no roots in either the mafia or a vindictive colleague: apparently, Andrea Di Gisi, a disgruntled employee of Soldera, is the one who opened the spigots of the casks, letting 626 hectolitres of magnificent wine go down the drain. Di Gisi is now accused of aggravated breaking & entering and company sabotage. Such is the conclusion of the investigations of the Carabinieri of Siena and Montalcino, coordinated by Judge Aldo Natalini (pictured right), which were explained in a press conference in Siena last Tuesday. Di Gisi, the Carabinieri stated, acted because he had an axe to grind with Soldera, who had fired him just a few months ago. According to Judge Natalini, Di Gisi is the most likely culprit because "whoever did it knew the company well, the custodian's work schedule and the fact that there were no hidden cameras. Moreover, the Carabinieri tapped some of Di Gisi's phone calls and his trousers, still soaked in wine, were found during a search in his house".



Report

Puglia's "Es" is the best

Primitivo di Manduria Es 2010 Gianfranco Fino is the best Italian red wine of 2012, according to the Top 100 ranking of "Gentleman's Magazine", which compared the scores of the guides by Gambero Rosso, Espresso, Veronelli, Maroni and Bibenda. Second position goes to San Leonardo 2007 Tenuta San Leonardo, followed by Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2008 Sandrone, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico 2005 Bertani, Sassicaia 2009 Tenuta San Guido and Torgiano Rosso Vigna Monticchio Riserva 2007 Lungarotti, all at n. 3.



Wine & Food

Bottura & Costa: solidarity for Emilia from bow to stern

Haute cuisine will meet solidarity during the Christmas and New Year's Eve Galas on the Costa Crociere vessels, both in the Mediterranean and in Dubai, with "Vieni in Italia con me", the menu authored by Italy's number one chef, Massimo Bottura - with a fond thought for his native Emilia Romagna, which was wrecked by a terrible earthquake last May. Many of the ingredients for the courses that will no doubt mesmerize the 20.000 passengers come from there: a way to bolster local producers with generosity both in the plate and in the heart.

For the record

Wine, a worthy investment

Avignonesi, the historical brand of Nobile, has announced the acquisition of 66 hectares of vineyards in the zone of the Montepulciano denomination, from

Golmat Limited. It's the third acquisition in 18 months for Virginie Saverys, bringing the firm - one of the largest producers of Nobile - to 200 hectares.



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