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## News



### A "Slave of Rome"

The recent electoral agreement reached between the Secretary of the Italian Democratic Party PD Pierluigi Bersani and his young challenger, Matteo Renzi, was coined at a dinner table in the Roman restaurant "Grano", with a bottle of Menzenhof by Colterenzio, a wine from Alto Adige made with Schiava - "Slave" - grapes. A further example of how politics is no stranger to eating, especially in those Roman "restaurants of power" like Enoteca al Parlamento of Achilli, the cuisine of Filippo La Mantia at the Majestic Hotel, Harry's Bar, Ai Due Ladroni and so on and so forth. A common trait of both right-wing and left-wing Italian politicians, from Craxi to Berlusconi.



### "Slow" Parliament?

We wrote about how the Italian Parliament lacks a certain attention to the big themes of agriculture and the wine & food sector in general. It is a "structural" problem, due to the extremely scarce representation of the sector "at the very highest levels" of the Italian public administration, according to Paolo Benvenuti, director of the Città del Vino association, commenting the lists of candidates for both House and Senate for the Italian Democratic Party PD, which will be finalized today - and might fix this problem, it seems. The names are Carlin Petrini, President of Slow Food and previously shortlisted for the local election of Turin in 2011, Oscar Farinetti, head of Eataly and outspoken political commentator and Giorgio Calabrese, TV nutritionist and first of the not elected to the Senate in 2008.

## Report

### Vandalism at Abraxas

"More than 700 hectolitres of wine, 350 of those being Passito, went down the drain and a wall was destroyed, for a total damage that is more than one million euros": this is how Calogero Mannino, head of the Sicilian Abraxas Winery, described the act of vandalism that recently took place at his firm. "Some offered me their wine and I received messages of solidarity all the way from Friuli, but it is an act that, more than just me, the world of wine didn't deserve". Investigations are ongoing.



## First Page

### Professor Stefano Cordero di Montezemolo and the Italian wine economy in 2013

What will the main trends of 2013 be in Italy as far as the wine economy is concerned? A complex question, to be sure, and that Professor Stefano Cordero di Montezemolo, Director of the European School of Economics of Milan and Florence, answered by painting a nuanced - but generally warm - picture. By and large, the crisis is still on the prowl and as dangerous as ever, but "the wine sector held its ground a lot better than others, at least on the production side", he pointed out, "some structural aspects still leave a lot to be desired, though". As far as the products themselves are concerned, for 2013 "many producers are proving that they are aware of the supply situation in general, which they are by and large redefining because some business product portfolios are becoming a bit too complex", Professor Montezemolo went on to explain, "and businesses will increasingly segment their supply in order to focus on a more limited number of labels, and then invest more and more on those labels, both communication-wise and promotion-wise". Moving on to market analysis, Professor Montezemolo warned about a sort of "point of no return": Italian wine firms "will have to keep a sure footing in the big, traditional markets, rather than exposing themselves with riskier ventures on the so-called "new markets" like China, India and so on. The market trend of the United States, in this regard, is paradigmatic. It's a market where wine consumption levels are still low but no matter what one may think, there is still margin for further growth". Finally, as far as distribution is concerned, the signals are less straightforward, but "to succeed in mass retail firms must provide services, from assortment to logistics, and there's still a lot to do on that front. Smaller firms, in particular, must build distribution centres in order to collate the strengths of more businesses and sum them all up".

## Focus

### The scientist who loved agriculture

Rita Levi Montalcini, the godmother of all Italian scientists, who passed away last week in Rome at the age of 103, was also a friend of wine and agriculture. After winning the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1986, she was elected honorary Senator for life in 2001, the culmination of a life spent making Italy proud; born to a Jewish family in Turin in 1909, she was the first woman to be admitted to the Papal Academy of Science, and her surname belied her bond with Montalcino, home of Brunello (the town gave her honorary citizenship in 1992). To celebrate her 100th birthday, Umbrian winemaker Caprai created a "25 years" limited edition of Sagrantino di Montefalco, made from the Cobra vineyard - an experimental piece of land where all ancient genotypes of Sagrantino are protected and cultivated - and the selling profits were given to her Foundation, which promotes education among African women. And even if it wasn't her main field of interest, Montalcini often spoke to the world of agriculture, encouraging the sector to invest in research, to not be afraid of experimenting and "not fear inexistent things". She will be sorely missed.



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## Wine & Food

### From cashmere to wine, Brunello Cucinelli's new adventure

Rumours say that the first wine will be a red - probably an international blend, according to his passion for Supertuscans, which he "confessed" to Winenews some time ago; but it is certain that the oenologist will be the renowned Michele Baiocco. Be that as it may, the debut of cashmere entrepreneur Brunello Cucinelli in the world of wine, in "his" Umbrian city of Solomeo, is very close. Mum's the word on the names of the firm and of the wine (or wines), and it is also unclear whether Cucinelli's new adventure will be a tribute to his family history or something more. 2013 will tell.

## For the record

### McDonald's bets on young Italians

Young people and jobs - a touchy subject in Italy today - are the two protagonists of McDonald's new TV commercial in Italy, authored by renowned director Gabriele

Salvatores. The fast food giant used the commercial to tell about the many young people that have been hired, and the 3.000 more it will hire in the next three years.

