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News



Galloni, "Advocate" no more

His interview to WineNews was the last one that renowned critic Antonio Galloni gave as the editor for Italy of the world-famous "Wine Advocate" magazine. The critic has recently stated that he's leaving Robert Parker's creation to try his hand at a new editorial venture online, at antoniogalloni.com. "A multimedia and technological platform", the site says, "through which Galloni will publish his reports on Italian wines, on Champagnes and on Californian and Burgundy wines, with a gradually expanding coverage to more regions". The decision has in all probability been influenced by Robert Parker's decision to sell his magazine to a group of Asian investors.



"Black Rooster" revolution

The "Chianti Classico Revolution" is now a reality; the details of one of the most important operations in the world of Italian denominations will be revealed on February 19th at the "Chianti Classico Collection" event, but in the meantime the Consortium of Chianti Classico has activated its overhaul of the denomination, with quality evolution and competition as its guiding stars. The key points of this revolution are restyling the historical "Black Rooster" brand and the introduction of a new wine at the top of the quality pyramid of the denomination. Furthermore, the Riserva (which is 40% of total turnover of the denomination) will be valued even more, and the process of distribution of "on tap" wine from its territories will also be modified. The market, as ever, will be the final judge.

Report

Montalcino's Argiano sold

Argiano, one of the most ancient estates and winemakers in Montalcino, with over 100 hectares of land (52 dedicated to grapes) and a splendid Renaissance-style villa, built by the noble Sienese family Pecci and envisioned by Architect Baldassarre Peruzzi, was recently sold by Noemi Marone Cinzano. Rumours have it - since no official figures were given - that the total sum hovers between 40 and 50 million Euros, and that a group of Brazilian investors would be the buyers.



First Page

Wine tourism still a niche, but a greener one

Focused on the environment, more social than ever, an important trend, but still a niche. This is wine tourism according to the Italian foundation Censis and Città del Vino's 11th report "Observatory on Wine Tourism in Italy", the organization of the most wine-oriented municipalities in Italy, which was presented yesterday at the BIT event in Milan. Environment quality is still the main appeal factor (23%), while wine & food still has margin for improvement. The Internet is the main tool used by travellers to organize their wine tourism experiences (89.2%), and more and more Italian municipalities are meeting that need by going online (88.3%). Furthermore, wine tourism is impervious to the crisis, but a national strategy is needed: 85% of mayors and 61% of trade professionals think that the portfolio of new destinations could be widened even more. The most wine & food oriented territory in Italy is Cuneo, thanks to both top-tier wine producers and caterers, followed by Verona and Siena. The wine tourism market has yet to reach its maturity and it follows the wine market: it grew (+12% in 2012 over 2011) thanks to the influx of new foreign tourists, which make up for the drop in Italian ones. "Wine tourism", said Pietro Iadanza, President of Città del Vino, "must be a primary focus of attention for the next Italian government". Among the reasons for wine tourism travel, quite surprisingly, wine & food isn't the first: environment is (23%), followed by arts & culture (19%), fairs and events (19%), then wine & food (17%) and wine (13%). But how can more tourists be allured? By giving more power to communication, and first of all web communication since it is the main tool that tourists use (89.2%), followed by word-of-mouth (76.9%), specialized guides (44.6%), "Strade del Vino" tours (24.6%), travel agencies (23.1%), magazines (16.9%) and tourist promotion agencies (18.3%). But there is a tool that has been the spark of many a discussion: the sojourn tax, which is currently being applied in very few places (only 14% of Italian municipalities use it, and 2% more will follow), but that - if properly explained - can become an important source of resources for the territory.

Focus

From wine tourism to cultural adventure

Wine tourism in Italy is the driving force behind 5 million tourists and a total turnover of 4 to 5 billion Euros every year. But according to one of its pioneers, Professor Magda Antonioli Corigliano of Milan's Bocconi University, a lot more could be done. Wine tourism, says Antonioli Corigliano, has become a true cultural adventure: "tourists come to Italy not only to discover its wine & food products, but to discover the territories through those products. They are looking for an experience, for emotions, to try and discover as much as possible about those products and the place they originate from, through their uniqueness and through the hospitality of the territories". A new form of cultural tourism, then, evolved from the '80s, when it started to walk on its own legs, through trial and error, "like the Strade del Vino project, which tanked because its portfolio flattened and because too much attention was given to the products and not enough to their territories. Not to mention the lack of a strategic perspective, which is now essential, given how many new markets are opening up - not only BRIC countries, but places like Mexico, Korea, the Gulf Countries and so on".



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Wine & Food

Here comes "VitisDB", the first database of Italian varieties

The first online database of Italian grape varieties, with over 2.300 specimens, is now online. Its name is VitisDB, and it was created by the University of Pisa, with financial grants from Collemassari SpA (property of winemaker Claudio Tipa, with Collemassari in Montecucco, Grattamacco in Bolgheri and Poggio di Sotto in Montalcino), from the Bertarelli Foundation (a non-profit organization created by Tipa and his sister Iris Bertarelli), the Ager Agency and the collaboration of over 20 national institutions operating in the field of agricultural research. Info: www.vitisdb.it.

For the record

Civiltà del Bere's "Magnificent Six"

According to the cross-reference made by Civiltà del Bere on the latest editions of Italian wine guides, the six best Italian wines are Sassetta 2009 San Guido,

Grattamacco 2009 Grattamacco, Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2008 Sandrone, Amarone 2005 Bertani, San Leonardo 2007 San Leonardo and Ben Ryè 2010 by Donnafugata.

