



OperaWine
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Italian Weekly WineNews.it



Issue 86 - Apr. 29th-May 4th, 2013 - Expressly for wine lovers, professionals and opinion leaders the world over
Registration number 709, Courthouse of Siena, March 31st, 2001 - Editor-in-chief: Alessandro Regoli

News



A vineyard in the sea

Pictured above is probably one of the closest vineyards to the sea in the entire world. A "one-of-a-kind" specimen that WineNews visited in Contrada Belice di Mare, near the border between the Sicilian municipalities of Menfi and Selinunte-Castelvetrano, a stone's throw from the Natural Park of the estuary of the Belice river. It is managed by one of the partners of the Settesoli firm, one of Italy's most important wine cooperatives. And who knows, someday - as has happened before, both in the "Belpaese" and in the rest of the world - a unique wine, capable of narrating one of those extraordinary stories that wine consumers are looking for, might come from there.



SMS

Sicily, a wine lab

Sicily, to quote Professor Attilio Scienza, is a true "wine laboratory" in the Mediterranean Sea, thanks to existing synergies between private individuals and businesses, the public sector and the Italian academies: a mix that is doing both research and experiments in the field, which in turn benefit businesses and their products. The last 10 years have seen Sicily leap forward, and now it enjoys both an "all-embracing" DOC and a lot of peculiar products from its most characteristic territories, like Etna, Vittoria, Marsala, Noto and Pantelleria. Be it with indigenous or international varieties, quality has gone only one way, up, as we have noted during this year's "Sicilia en Primeur" - an event that, thanks to Assovini, can properly portray this land with tastings, visits, arts, wine & food and so on.

Report

With agriculture in mind

More than two months after the latest elections, Italy finally has a Government, and Prime Minister Enrico Letta has called the Italian wine & food sector "an extraordinary driver for the economic growth of the country". A good start, as far as intentions go, and a declaration that puts an oft-neglected sector back in the spotlight. Even more so since wine & food, together with tourism and culture, is a national treasure and quite the competitive advantage. Best wishes, then, to both Letta and to his Government.



First Page

Wine & spirits, a trusted investment

The global wine & spirits sector, like any other, is certainly not immune to the effects of the economic crisis, which is now nearing its sixth continuous year. But, as more than one commentator has been pointing out, it is still one of the few growing productive sectors in the world, and investors are firmly placing their chips in its direction. Diageo, for example - the world's biggest player in wine & spirits - has recently issued its first public debt offering in nearly a year, totalling something like 3.25 billion U.S. dollars with due dates going from 3 to 30 years: according to Bloomberg news, the bonds could enjoy a "triple A" rating from all major rating agencies, like Moody's, Standard & Poor's and so on. The sums involved are dizzying indeed, and the liquidity from the bonds will be used to pay commercial papers and interests on older bonds, which are due next July, for a total of 1.49 billion U.S. dollars. The move from Diageo, though, is simply the latest example of how the beverage sector has very enticing capabilities for both short- and long-term growth. A few days ago it was reported that the wine & spirits division of luxury colossus LVMH, which controls brands such as Krug, Dom Perignon, Mœet & Chandon, Veuve Cliquot, Cheval Blanc and Château d'Yquem, has grown 19% year-over-year (mainly thanks to the seemingly neverending growth of the Asian and Chinese markets), vastly outperforming the haute couture division, with brands like Dior, Louis Vuitton, Fendi and Bulgari. Moreover, the latest data on global wine commerce is more than promising: according to the "Wine Intelligence" magazine, its overall value should hover around 164 billion U.S. dollars, but the best might be yet to come, since according to the latest International Wine and Spirit Research report (compiled for Vinexpo) wine consumption should grow a solid 5.3% in volume by 2016, reaching a grand total of 34 billion bottles. A positive trend that Italy, at least through its leading firms, keeps on riding: the sentiment among national winemakers is definitely positive, and 2012 exports have soared over 4.6 billion Euros in 2012, to boot.

Focus

"Grape juice" from Langhe

The idea in itself might not be very original, but it will surely seem an unpleasant one for many, as it has been undertaken in a different way and by important names: the revamping of "Succo d'Uva" (grape juice) is a project created by 9 winemakers of the Langhe region in Piedmont. They are members of the "Piccole Vigne" association in Langhe - which is definitely not a secondary territory for Italian wine - together with the Oenological School of Alba, one of the country's most important academies, and the local chapter of the Italian farmers' association Coldiretti. The goal is to make a juice with local grapes only, Barbera and Dolcetto first and foremost, in order to create an alcohol-free product that is made from high-quality raw materials, looks good next to the wines of the territory and is aimed for children, but not exclusively. The tagline is "Zero alcohol, all taste and health". "It is a bit of a gamble", Fabrizio Rapallino of Coldiretti explains, "since our grapes are the starting point of a lot of excellent DOCs. Can we make a product with no alcohol, but with the same quality? We believe we can. Wine is still our centrepiece, but it is time to consider other products made from grapes".



A CAMPAIGN FINANCED ACCORDING TO EC REGULATION N. 1234/2007



A CAMPAIGN FINANCED ACCORDING TO EC REGULATIONS N. 1234/07

Wine & Food

San Leonardo invents full tasting in half bottles

Tenuta San Leonardo's latest invention is more of a service to the culture of wine than to its underlying business, since it sums up a great wine, old vintages and half bottles - a format that is currently struggling under the blows of "by the glass" consumption. The firm of the Guerrieri Gonzaga family will soon start selling, both on their website and in national wine shops, a limited edition box (1.500) with half bottles of their San Leonardo 2005, 2006 and 2007 - and a price tag of roughly 50 Euros.

For the record

A new Minister for Agriculture

As of last Monday, Italy has a new Minister for Agriculture: Nunzia De Girolamo, 38, is a former member of the House of Representatives Agriculture Commission, and comes

from a family of farmers - her father, Nicola, is the President of Benevento's Agricultural Consortium, which in turn manages the Cantina del Taburno firm.

