

News



Ugo Nespolo to visit Chiarlo

Wine and art enjoy a very close relationship in Italy, and one of the examples of this ménage will be 10 years old next July 6th: it is "La Court", the artistic park of the famous winemaker Chiarlo, in Castelnuovo Calcea, near Asti, in Piedmont. And the many pieces of art that are currently there - created by names such as Emanuele Luzzati, Fabio Cavanna, Dedo Roggero-Fossati, Ronaldo Carbone, Marcello Mannuzza and Peppino Campanella - will soon have a new companion, since Piedmontese painter and sculptor Ugo Nespolo is well on the way to completing the "door" of the "Earth" area, one of the four thematic areas of the park together with Air, Water and Fire.



Wine tourism on the rise

The average wine tourist spends at least 193 Euros per trip, generating a total turnover in Italy that hovers between 3 and 5 billion Euros every single year: wine tourism also grew 12% in 2012, economic woes notwithstanding, mainly thanks to foreign aficionados (+3.5%), and the Internet is now the single most used tool to plan and book trips. The data comes from the yearly report of the Observatory on Wine Tourism - Censis, and two distinct events will celebrate wine tourism this weekend: Monforte d'Alba, in the hills of Piedmont, will host the latest edition of the BITEG exhibition and fair, and on May 26th "Cantine Aperte" will see over 1.000 participating winemaking firms from all over Italy throw their cellar doors open to visitors and customers alike.

Report

Italians cook traditionally

According to a Doxa survey on "Italian cuisine today", social networks, TV shows and cooking classes are all well and good, but a whopping 71% of Italians still cook following suggestions and instructions that have been passed on to them by their grandmothers and mothers. 76% of the sample share suggestions either by telling them or by writing them on paper, men are ever more drawn to the allure of the kitchen and young people are the most aware of the importance of food quality and safety in general.



First Page

Montalcino's future is tradition, Biondi Santi says

"The Greppo Estate, where Brunello di Montalcino was created in the 1800s, is "the" tradition and not an iota of what my father Franco and our forefathers did and guarded to this day will ever be changed". Such is the opinion of Jacopo Biondi Santi, son of Franco Biondi Santi - the "warden" of Brunello di Montalcino - who officially took the helm of the family firm last Thursday "as administrator of the Greppo estate, direct successor to my father and agricultural entrepreneur". While some of the most famous vintages of their Brunello are kept safe in the vaults of the Estate cellar, from the priceless 1888 and 1891 to the 1925, 1945 and 1955 - the only Italian wine worthy of the title of one of the 12 best wines of the 20th century, according to "Wine Spectator" magazine - onwards to 1964, 1970, 1975 and so on, Biondi Santi told WineNews what the future holds for one of the most important Italian wine families, since Ferruccio Biondi Santi invented the renowned Tuscan red, which has become the most famous Italian wine in the world. And he also told us what the future holds in store for him as a winemaker and as the new "warden" of the history of Brunello: that role, he said, will not hold back the desire to experiment that has run in the family since Clemente Santi, who received a prize for his Moscatello di Montalcino at the Paris Universal Expo back in 1867. "Our path will still follow our tradition: our Brunello will always be the same, with the same production methods, with the same grapes from our BBS/II plants (the acronym stands for Brunello Biondi Santi, type II), the Sangiovese strain that my great-grandfather Ferruccio Biondi Santi made canon. It has been here for two hundred years, its history is guaranteed through a genetic bond from mother plants to daughter plants - and our brand will of course be the same as well. I will defend this heritage of history and quality with the same dedication and tenacity that my father Franco did. Experimentation, which is a different thing altogether, will be brought forward in a different area and in a different Estate altogether: we will do it in Maremma, in the Castello di Montepò Estate".

Focus

A wine's reputation is made online

The reputation of a wine is built on the Internet, as the latest report by business information firm Crisis D&B points out: the firm monitored the online reputation of wine in the last 12 months on institutional and information websites, blogs and social networks, analysing over 37.000 documents, and the aggregate sentiment - a percentage value derived from the total occurrence of positive terms - stands at 9.36%, a flattering value. Vinality is also an oft-mentioned topic, with an even more flattering sentiment (20.89%), and then comes the keyword, "vineyards" with a 22.8% value. As far as red wines go, Lambrusco, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet are the most used words, but Sangiovese enjoys the highest sentiment value (4.16%), while for whites Pinot and Chardonnay are by far the ones that are mentioned more frequently - the first being the white wine with the highest sentiment value (18.66%). Regarding prestige reds, Brunello and Barolo are firmly in the lead, followed by Barbaresco and Amarone, and when it comes to dessert wines Moscato enjoys a 17.81% sentiment value, followed by Passito, Recioto and Albana.



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Wine & Food

Insurance giant Unipol's first purchase is in Montalcino

The allure of the homeland of Brunello is apparently as strong as ever, since insurance giant Unipol is reportedly very close to finalizing its purchase of 12 hectares of vineyards to be added to the 26 of the "La Poderina" estate, which the firm inherited from SaiAgricola in one of the most important denominations of Italian wine. The 12 hectares, currently owned by Roberto Bellini, would further widen Unipol's footprint in Montalcino, possibly signalling the birth of a new wine empire in the heart of the territory of Brunello, born out of the ashes of former insurance firm Fondiaria-Sai.

For the record

Italy bested France in Russia

According to the Italian Istituto Grandi Marchi chaired by Piero Antinori, which is currently touring Russia's main cities, Italian wine exports to the country have reached

26.88 million Euros in value and 8.2 million litres in 2013, surpassing the exports of French wines and topping the ranking of wine exporting countries to Russia.

