



Issue 359 - March 19th-24th, 2018 - 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



Opera Wine über alles

“Opera Wine is the only partnership of Wine Spectator magazine with a wine fair, Vinitaly, and a wine country, Italy. A Taste of Spain, the event that took place during the latest edition of Bordeaux’s Vinexpo, has been an exception that does not entail a structured plan, as opposed to Opera Wine, which is by now the historical preview of Vinitaly”. This is what Thomas Matthews, Executive Editor of Wine Spectator, told WineNews at Düsseldorf’s ProWein, reassuring the world of Italian wine on the uniqueness of its relationship with the magazine, as embodied by the event that since 2012 brings the best 100 wineries of Italy at Verona’s Palazzo della Gran Guardia.



SMS **Gambero Rosso & Class**
Gambero Rosso, Italy’s most important wine & food publishing group, has a new owner: the majority share of the property now belongs to Class Editori, the publishing group founded and led by journalist Paolo Panerai, which also has Domini di Castellare, a group of wineries that has often been awarded by the “Guida Vini d’Italia” guide of Gambero Rosso itself. As reported by Italian financial daily Milano Finanza, Class will obtain 67.48% of the shares of Gambero Rosso, and in turn will give Cuccia’s firm 27.96% of its own shares, making it one of the main shareholders of the Class group. The merger’s objective, as stated by the groups themselves, is to create a single multimedia group with strong expertise in finance, events and in the very best of “made in Italy” products.

Report

Farnese Vini eyes an IPO
Farnese Vini has been enjoying quite spectacular results of late: 70 million Euros in turnover in 2017 (up 27% y-o-y), 96% of it from exports, thanks to 80 wines from Abruzzi, Apulia, Sicily, Basilicata, Campania and Tuscany, with a tailor-made approach toward territories and growers, and the financial support of the NB Renaissance Partners fund, which has acquired the majority share of the firm led by CEO Valentino Sciotti in 2016. Reasons enough to openly plan for a not-so-distant IPO ...



First Page

Italy front and center at ProWein 2018

Italy, as usual, has firmly taken center stage at the recent 2018 edition of the biggest wine fair at a global level, Düsseldorf’s ProWein, which took place this week: with more 1.700 exhibitors out of 6.870 from 64 countries, Italy was the most represented country, in order to consolidate its leadership position in a market that is simply vital for its wine exports (2.4 billion Euros in wine imports in 2017, with Italy taking the lion’s share, 30%, both in value and in volume) and to keep in touch with buyers and professionals from the four corners of the world, from the States to China, for a grand total of more than 60.000 from 133 countries. Germany is a traditionally slow-changing environment, with consumption basically unchanged in the last 4 years, but average prices are indeed changing, with less consumers buying bottles priced under 2.99 Euros and more becoming willing to spend up to 15 Euros for one, thanks to the arrival of Millennials, which, according to a Wine Intelligence report, are more open to new wine styles and bottles from the entire world, under the banner of a cautious “premiumization”. A Wine Intelligence seminar, titled “The world of wine in 15 years’ time: key success factors”, also identified four main changes to look out for: disruption (both in world politics and in the economy), ageing in the general population, communication (which has radically changed, and will do so faster in the future) and wine shifts, like the drop in consumption of winemaking countries, women drinking more wine, the growth of online sales and the generational shifts taking place in first-tier markets. The fair has been a resounding success, and this in turns raises the question of more spaces and infrastructures for the future: “we want to grow”, Hans Werner Reinhard, Managing Director of Messe Düsseldorf, told WineNews, “but gradually. The reason why Vinexpo is in trouble is because something went wrong when it came to logistics, organization and hospitality, with hotels raising prices beyond measure. We’re working to avoid those mistakes: once everything will be ready, from a logistical standpoint, then ProWein will tackle the issue of expansion”, he pointed out.

Focus

A new winery for Italian wine icon Masseto

Masseto, one of the most renowned Italian wines the world over, and among the most performing labels in international auctions, will soon have a new place to call home: the 2018 harvest of the great red from Bolgheri will be the first to take place in the new winery, authored by the prestigious “ZITO+MORI” studio. The structure will be active from this year, but, as CEO Giovanni Geddes da Filicaja explained to WineNews at ProWein, “it will be officially inaugurated in April 2019. It’ll be completely underground: the only visible part will be the old Masseto house, which has been rebuilt”. The new home marks a turning point for Masseto, a new page of its history that is completely separated - as has been for years, for all intents and purposes - from Ornellaia. “Both for marketing, which will be led by Alex Belson, and for distribution: with the exception of Italy, the U.S. and Canada, where these two wines have a common one, Masseto will be distributed worldwide on the place de Bordeaux, to 15 prestigious negociants. Furthermore, oenologist Eleonora Marconi (previously at Frescobaldi’s Castello di Nipozzano) will join us, and will work under the supervision of Axel Heinz”.



Wine & Food

A soccer dream team takes shape in Salento’s vineyards

Longtime football personality Fabio Cordella, former General Director of Budapest Honved, has been a winemaker for quite some time now, “with my winery in Salento, and I have many clients and admirers among players and coaches, like Lippi, Conte, Moriero and Ferguson”, he told WineNews. And now, he wants to create a dream team “working with great champions and friends, like Buffon, Candela, Sneijder, Ronaldinho and Zamorano, who make wines together with my oenologists”: a projects that aims to join football and wine in an uniquely original way.

For the record

Biondi Santi, Ornellaia under Christie’s hammer

The recent “Fine & Rare Wines Featuring Wines Direct from Grandi Cru d’Italia Estates” auction by Christie’s in London saw 12 bottles of Brunello Riserva Biondi Santi 1955 as the Italian top lot (20.400 Pounds), followed by 6 bottles of Ornellaia 2001 for 6.000: the 5 lots of the 2015 “Vendemmia d’Artista” changed hands for 10.000 Pounds.

