

## News



### “Cave” Verdicchio

In the Marche region, home of Verdicchio, a peculiar experiment took place in the monumental cave complex in Frasassi, where, at a constant temperature of 14 degrees Celsius, 98% humidity and total absence of light, three bottles of Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico were aged for three years: namely, Le Vaglie 2007 Santa Barbara, Vigna Novali 2007 Moncaro and Grancasale 2006 Casalfarneto. A team of speleologists then retrieved the bottles, uncorked them and 36 experts from all over the world tasted the wines at the stop in central Italy of the “Collisioni from Verdicchio to Marche”, curated by Ian D’Agata, in Jesi. The wines have apparently shown “great freshness and integrity”...



### SMS Assoenologi and 2016

According to the national oenologists association Assoenologi’s first estimates of the 2016 harvest, the 2016 vintage most definitely will become one for the books, quality-wise, particularly for red grape varieties. The association, led by Riccardo Cotarella, after pointing out that everything depends on the crucial last meteorological phase, estimates that the harvest will yield a little less than 49 million hectolitres of wine and must (along the lines of the UIV-ISMEA estimates, 1% less than 2015), while quantities will vary noticeably from Region to Region (Sicily and Campania are down 20%; Abruzzi, Emilia Romagna and Apulia went up 10%). Veneto is once more the most productive Region, at 9.3 million hectolitres, followed by Apulia (8.7) and Emilia Romagna (8.1 million).

## Report

### Donnafugata encore

Donnafugata has pioneered wine production on the island of Pantelleria since 1989, growing Zibibbo grapes in Cantina Khamma (and today in 12 contradas), where Ben Ryè is made. It has recently doubled down by winning the auction for Cantina Nuova Agricoltura, with a 500.000 Euros bid. “It’s an acquisition”, Antonio Rallo commented, “which will allow us to bring our Pantelleria project forward. We really believe in it, and since building from the ground up there is very hard, we couldn’t just enlarge our winery”.

## First Page

### 48.5 million hectolitres in 2016, say UIV-ISMEA

According to Unione Italiana Vini’s latest estimates, which are based on the latest data coming from government agency ISMEA, the 2016 harvest in Italy will yield around 48.5 million hectolitres, 2% less than 2015 (which has been a particularly abundant year, nonetheless). Should the estimate be confirmed at the end of the harvest, a couple more weeks down the road, generally speaking, it would mean 9% growth compared to the current 5-year average - and, generally speaking, the estimates paint an encouraging picture of “Vineyard Italy”, health-wise, regarding both quality and quantity, a state of things “that will allow comfortably facing both the domestic and foreign markets”. According to current data, 2016 would still see Italy as the holder of the symbolic record of world’s top producing wine country, since the numbers in France look bad indeed, at 42.9 million hectolitres (10% less than 2015 and 7% less than the 5-year average), while Spain’s results should hover around 42 to 43 million hectolitres. Among the four most important Italian wine Regions, Sicily is the only one that has dropped in production (15% less), while Veneto - thanks to the latest plantings becoming active - Apulia and Emilia Romagna have gone up slightly. In the north, meanwhile, Piedmont is making a comeback, after a couple of quite stingy years, Valle d’Aosta has grown significantly and Liguria is stable overall. Friuli Venezia Giulia has gone down slightly compared to 2015, but markedly up compared to the 5-year average, while Lombardy and Trentino Alto Adige, due to the weather, have suffered a bit. Tuscany and Umbria have also gone down slightly, while Lazio, Abruzzi and Marche have grown. Volume-wise, Campania has gone down, since bad weather conditions have had an adverse effect on the vegetative growth process of the vines - which, at the end of the day, means a remarkable 20% less compared to 2015. The same thing, give or take, has happened in Sicily, leading to a 15% drop. The 2016 harvest, finally, will be good overall in Molise, Calabria and Basilicata, while Sardinia will be stable compared to 2015.

## Focus

### Lots of DOPs and IGPs, few big numbers

The cultural richness of Italian wine lies undoubtedly in its myriad of indigenous grape varieties, and the abundance of its territories and Appellations: 73 DOCGs, 332 DOCs and 118 IGTs. The top 10 DOPs alone are worth more than half (52.6%) of the 13.7 million hectolitres bottled in 2015-2016 (up 2.8% overall, year-over-year) and the top 10 IGPs are worth more than 85% of the 8.6 total million hectolitres (up 1%). These are the results of the WineNews analysis of the latest data from the government agency ISMEA regarding Italy’s certified productions. Among DOPs, the biggest one is Prosecco DOC, at 2.68 million hectolitres (up 15.4%), followed by Montepulciano d’Abruzzo, at 857.501 hectolitres (1.7% less) and by Chianti, the largest denomination in Tuscany, at 720.382 hectolitres (4.2% less). Among IGPs, then, the biggest one, at 1.6 million hectolitres, is IGT Delle Venezie, up 12.5%, followed by Terre Siciliane (unchanged at 1.2 million) and by IGT Veneto, at 1.1 million (up 0.4%). These numbers, of course, are influenced every year both by market trends and production values, and the weather conditions during each vintage.



## Wine & Food

### The 22 top names at the “Merano Wine Festival” (out of 4.000)

Arnaldo Caprai, Avignonesi, Tenuta Greppo Biondi Santi, Braida, Capannelle, Castellare di Castellina, Domenico Clerico, Duemani, Felsina, Ferragù, Guerrieri Rizzardi, Kellerei Terlan, Le Macchiole, Masciarelli, Maso Martis, Mastroberardino, Michele Satta, Monteverzine, Armando Parusso, Palari, San Salvatore and Tenuta di Trinoro are the 22 wineries (out of 4.000 contestants) that have been awarded top scores - 95/100 points or higher - as well as the “Wine Award Platinum” at the 2016 “Merano Wine Festival”, which took place this week ([www.meranowinefestival.com](http://www.meranowinefestival.com)).

## For the record

### The best Blanc des Blancs in the world

The 2016 Champagne & Sparkling Wine World Championships has awarded the “World Champion Classic Blanc de Blancs” and the “Best Italian Sparkling Wine” awards

to Ferrari Brut - as well as the “Best Trentodoc” award, to boot. Berlucchi ‘61 NV Rosé was the best Franciacorta, and the best Prosecco was Nino Franco NV Rustico.

