

## News



### Sassicaia & San Leonardo

Only two Italian wines have received top marks in the 2017 edition of the 7 main Italian wine guides (namely, the ones published every year by "Gambero Rosso", "L'Espresso", Veronelli, Bibenda, Italian Sommelier Association AIS, Daniele Cernilli and Slow Wine's "I Grandi Vini"), which are Bolgheri Sassicaia 2013 Tenuta San Guido, from Tuscany, and San Leonardo 2011 Tenuta San Leonardo, from Trentino-Alto Adige. Besides their glorious heritage, history and quality, the two wines share a telling trait: both Sassicaia and San Leonardo were created by none other than the late Giacomo Tachis, the true "godfather" of modern Italian wine - and it shows...



### Asti Secco and Prosecco

**SMS** "The "Asti Secco" issue (whose procedure of approval is on-going, and could lead to debut in 2017) will have to be managed in a way to ensure that the label of this new kind of Asti does not evoke Prosecco at all". This, in a nutshell, is the result of the meeting between the Consortium of Asti DOCG and their colleagues of the Consortium of Prosecco, together with Franco Ricci Curbastro's Federdoc, following an official note by Sistema Prosecco, which unites the three appellations and Consortiums of Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore Docg, Prosecco Doc and Vini Asolo Montello. "We're worried about the possible confusion the consumer might have between the two sparklings", Stefano Zanette, President of Sistema Prosecco, explained.

## Report

### Time for Novello

Novello (new wine) is among us once more: the first red of the 2016 harvest is on Italian mass retail shelves, and it went on sale, according to the usual decree of the Ministry of Agriculture, on October 30th. Still, production data is unflattering, to say the least. 10 years ago, 17 million bottles of new wine were produced, but this year, the figure has plummeted to a mere 2 million, according to data from the Italian farmers association, Coldiretti.



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### "Dendrosurgery" to treat esca disease

"We open the grapevine trunk using small chainsaws and cut away the part that is infected by esca. The plant, now "de-toxified", then returns to its healthy state quite fast, starts blooming and becomes productive again". This is how Marco Simonit explains "dendrosurgery", the new technique to fight esca - one of the most dangerous and widespread grapevine trunk diseases, particularly in Europe. It was created by Simonit & Sirch, the "vine trainers" that are now a constant presence at some of Italy's most important wineries, not to mention France's (like Château d'Yquem, Château Latour, Louis Roederer and Moët & Chandon), and they teach at the Université de Bordeaux, as two of the world's most renowned experts in their field. The technique is "surgical" in the strictest sense, and eliminates the need to uproot sick plants. After five years of testing between Italy and France, the results seem to be interesting indeed, since 90% of all plants treated this way have returned to their normal productive rate. This, of course, entailed some hefty savings, since there is no replanting cost involved, not to mention the three years of zero production that the new plants need. The issue of esca disease is critical, as according to a report authored by the French Parliament in 2015, 13% of all French vineyards are tackling the problem of esca, and unless treated, it will devastate them. Not to mention wine quality, as Simonit & Sirch explained, "it is true that the analysis of grapes coming from diseased plants show us a moderate impact on phenolic composition, but sensory analysis has shown that a loss of quality is noticeable whenever more than 5% of the grapes used for a wine come from infected plants". In a sense, dendrosurgery is a "re-discovery", since Simonit & Sirch have modernized "also thanks to Denis Dubourdieu" a technique "described by Eavaz and Lafon as being used since ancient times, with very interesting results by Pousseard at the end of the 1800s". The testing took place in Champagne, Burgundy, Bordeaux, Isonzo, Franciacorta, Bolgheri and Collio, where the results were presented in the vineyards of the Schiopetto winery.

## Focus

### The two kings of "Wine Enthusiast"

Champagne 2012 Brut Krug, one of France's most iconic names, and Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2010 Biondi Santi Tenuta Greppo, the winery (and cradle) of one of Italy's greatest reds: these are the two "kings" - the only wines that have received a perfect 100/100 score - in the 2016 edition of "Wine Enthusiast" magazine's "Top 100 Cellar Selection", the ranking that selects the best wines out of the more than 20.000 the magazine reviews every year (two wines that should be left in the cellar for a few years, given their longevity). A total of 20 Italian wines are present (6 Brunello and 6 Barolo, Piedmont also, represented by one Barbaresco and one Gattinara, as well as 2 Taurasi from Campania and 4 wines from Sicily, including Etna and Cerasuolo di Vittoria), together with 34 wines from the U.S. and 24 French wines. "20 wines are in the "Top 100", Kerin O'Keefe, Italian editor for "Wine Enthusiast", explained, "but many more were worthy, and this testifies the level that Italian wine has reached. Out of the 3.000 wines that I reviewed this year, no fewer than 98 were selected for the "Cellar Selection" because of their high quality and perspective longevity".



## Wine & Food

### Langhe, Burgundy and beauty to safeguard and protect

Aubert De Villaine, co-owner of Domaine de la Romanée Conti, and Guillaume d'Angerville, President of Climats du Vignoble de Bourgogne, recently visited Grinzane Cavour for the "Langhe-Roero and Monferrato: waves of beauty" prize by the Piedmont Regional Cavour Wine Cellar. "There is much beauty, but much fragility as well. Once, it was normal to use pesticides in vineyards, but it is time to understand that our land is our heritage. We must avoid using chemicals in areas like ours, which are bearers of culture as well as winemaking territories", De Villaine declared.

## For the record

### Food leads growth of Italian franchising

Following 2.3% growth in the apparel 188.000 jobs. Moreover, food is the sector that has grown the most in interest between 2015 and 2016, 6.8% growth, for a total interest share of 28.3%.

