

News



Chianti Classico & Champagne

This week, Reims, in France, hosted the ceremony of the final signature of the agreement between the President of Consorzio del Chianti Classico, Sergio Zingarelli, and his counterparts of Comité Champagne Maxime Toubart and Jean-Marie Barillère (pictured above). The agreement "includes sharing experiences in the management of our governances", Zingarelli explained, "regarding legal protection outside the EU, the policies for touristic development and the promotion of our cultural heritage. We both have centuries-long traditions, and we represent countries that tell a tale of beauty and the capacity of promoting their respective cultural heritage".



Checks and registers

News related to wine-related frauds sadly abounds lately. The most recent one, last Wednesday, involves a criminal group that sold low-quality wines trying to pass them off as famous denominations, like Chianti, Brunello di Montalcino and so on. This news, of course, hurt Italian wine in its entirety, but, on the inevitable bright side, it shows us that the current system of checks is fully at work in Italy, and is working well, protecting consumers and honest producers alike. And, in the future, the system might work even better, hopefully, thanks to some new laws, like the one that created the Digital Registry for Winemakers, which will be mandatory from next January 1st, even though the old paper version can be used until April 30th, but only in conjunction with its new iteration.

Report

A sparkling end for 2016

Christmas and New Year's Eve festivities mean that no less than 62 million bottles of Italian sparklings will be uncorked (up 10% over 2015), and an additional 158 million abroad (up 20%). According to estimates by the Observatory on Wine on ISMEA data, the sector will close 2016 with a production of 4.69 million hectolitres (up 18% year-over-year), and 3.4 million exported, with the UK still being the main market - up 46% in value, to 236 million Euros, and 30% in volume, reaching 700.000 hectolitres.

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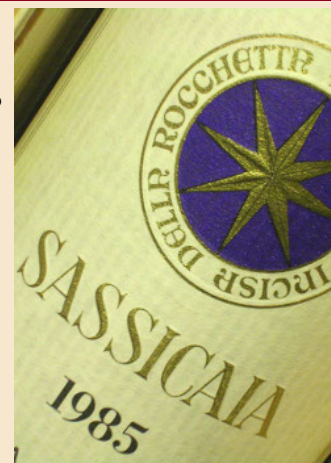
France invests in Brunello's history

One of the most important luxury groups in France has invested, for the very first time, in one of Italy's most iconic winemakers, and it has done so in one of its very top denominations as well. The EPI group, owned by the very wealthy Descours Family (their assets are worth 1.1 billion Euros, and they own many high-tier wine brands, like Piper-Heidsieck, Charles Heidsieck and Chateau La Verriere in Bordeaux, not to mention fashion brands like Bonpoint and JM Weston), has officially signed a partnership with Tenuta Greppo Biondi Santi, where, at the end of the 19th century, Brunello di Montalcino as we know it today was created. Jacopo Biondi Santi, the French group pointed out - confirming rumours anticipated by WineNews - will remain at the helm of the winemaking firm as President. Further details about what this partnership will entail for the future of the firm will come, most probably, during the New Year, but for now, the group that the Italian press defined as a "small LVMH" has described the deal as "a partnerships of strategies and capital". According to EPI's President, Charles Descours, "the know-how, pioneering spirit and drive towards excellence of the Biondi Santi family are a good match to EPI's values. We will keep on developing the wines of Biondi Santi, sharing Jacopo Biondi Santi's experience". Jacopo, who is also the oenologist of the estate, said that the partnership with the Descours family and the EPI group "is the chance for us to tie our activity to a group that shares our values: EPI will give us the support we need to develop our business, and will help us strengthen the reputation of our wines, and that of Brunello di Montalcino, internationally". Furthermore, Jacopo Biondi Santi pointed out that "this is how I'll project our firm in the future: EPI has a very good commercial network and communication capabilities, but quality- and quantity-wise, our Brunello will not change. This is why", he explained, "our French partners wanted me and my son Tancredi - who will soon join Jacopo in the management team - to handle the winery, just as before. They told me that otherwise, they wouldn't have invested in Tenuta Greppo at all".

Focus

Italy's most searched for wines in 2016

According to the "Top 100 Most Searched-For Wines" ranking, compiled every year by "Wine-Searcher", Sassicaia Tenuta San Guido has been the most searched-for Italian wine in 2016 (at number 10, up 3 spots), and 40.276 monthly searches. Tignanello Marchesi Antinori followed (at 22, up 6 spots), 26.002 queries, then Masseto, at spot 33 (from 2015's 36), 18.917 queries, while Ornellaia is still at 37, and 18.599 queries, followed by Solaia Marchesi Antinori, at number 53, and 13.580 queries per month (up 10 spots). Then come Barolo Riserva Monfortino Giacomo Conterno, number 64 and 11.852 queries (up from 66), Barolo Bartolo Mascarello, a new entry at spot 76 and 10.917, and Barbaresco Gaja at 79, and 10.659, up 16 spots from 2015. When it comes to the top 10 spots, France dominates, with Château Mouton Rothschild (100.991 searches), Château Lafite Rothschild (91.973 queries), Château Margaux (74.617), Dom Perignon (71.680 searches), Petrus (71.032), Château Latour (60.166 queries), Château Haut-Brion (49.795 searches), Opus One (49.467 queries), and Château d'Yquem at spot 9 (45.935 queries).



Wine & Food

Loads of Italian wines in the 2016 "Liv-Ex Power 100"

The 2016 edition of the "Liv-Ex Power 100" ranking, compiled with "The Drinks Business" by looking at scores, volumes on the market, mean price and prices on the secondary market, has lots of Italy in it. The first Italian name is Gaja (at 47, up 7 spots), followed by Masseto (51, was 52) and Sassicaia (55, down 28 spots). Giacomo Conterno has reached spot 59 (up from 2015's 119), followed by Ornellaia (73, was 62), Tignanello (84, down 39 spots), Solaia (86, no change from 2015), and another new entry, Bruno Giacosa (at 87), while Petrolo, at spot 91 (down 4 spots), is the last Italian winemaker.

For the record

The new "Terra Moretti" is officially born

This week, the Terra Moretti group has signed the closing of the deal through which it acquired winemakers Tenute Sella & Mosca and Teruzzi & Puthod, reaching a total of over 1.000 hectares of vineyards and a total output of 9.6 million bottles, with a turnover of 63.19 million Euros (which it hopes to grow to 90 million by 2021).

