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News



Brunello, an invention

Sometimes, narrating a wine as the expression of a territory just isn't enough. Take Brunello: behind the most famous Italian wine in the world, there is without a doubt the territory of Montalcino, which has always been focused on quality, and on Sangiovese, in its "Brunello" variety, which can give birth to wines made for a long ageing process - and those can be made only here, thanks to mild climate and diverse micro-environments. But, had it not been invented, it simply wouldn't be: its history, from the BB/11 clone to zoning, is fascinating, as Jacopo Biondi Santi told WineNews at Tenuta Greppo, where Brunello was born in the 19th century (<http://bit.ly/2oEGY7v>).



Soave bets on crus

Crus are an oft-touched subject in the world of Italian wine, but the so-called "additional geographical mention" are a reality for very few of its wine territories, like Barolo and Barbaresco, to name the most famous instances. But now, the Consortium of Soave, the most important white wine denomination of Italy, has decided to bet on them: after the official acknowledgement of its vineyard-studded hills as a "historical rural landscape" (the first wine region to reach that goal), now the next step is to bring its "historic vineyards" inside the production guidelines, in order to give the proper value to the various expression of the territory and of its main grape variety, Garganega, as Aldo Lorenzoni, General Director of the Consortium, told WineNews.

Report

Ornellaia for the arts

"The Essence" was the theme chosen by Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto for his embellishment of Ornellaia 2014's "Vendemmia d'Artista" project, through which the Bolgheri winemaker has been raising funds for NY's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation since 2009. Nine lots went under the hammer during the charity auction at the NY museum last week, for a grand total of over 104.000 Euro raised for the arts. Ornellaia's project has raised more than 1 million Euros since its inception.



First Page

China, Big Data in Montalcino's future

According to Wine Monitor-Nomisma data that was showcased during the celebrations for the 50th birthday of the Consortium of Brunello di Montalcino, which took place in the Tuscan city last week, Millennials (young people aged 18 to 35 years old) are the biggest age group of red wine drinkers in the United States (62%) and one of the main ones in Canada (66%). 26% of the latter, and 18% of the former, have consumed or bought Brunello in the last year, together with other great Italian reds like Barolo, Chianti and Amarone. According to Wine Monitor's Denis Pantini, "in the three biggest market for wine (United States, United Kingdom and Germany), great Italian reds, Brunello included, suffer from their price positioning, which is lower than the one of their French counterparts". In Italy, furthermore, almost all Brunello (86%) is bought in restaurants, Denis Pantini added, and China is the true challenge ahead, one where "forecasts say that red wine consumption should almost double in size in the next few years. The French "monopoly", so to speak, is a hard reality there, as well as the big role of price in wine consumption. But we're sure", he concluded, "that Brunello has everything that is needed in order to accept and win this challenge". Another big theme for the next years is the digital world, as highlighted by Heini Zachariassen, founder of Vivino. The software, which has become the de facto leader of wine apps, allows one to collect data about its users, ushering wine into the world of "Big Data". And, according to Vivino, the world's most popular Brunello wines (that is, the ones more frequently scanned with Vivino) are Banfi, Frescobaldi, Fattoria dei Barbi, Biondi Santi, Castel Giocondo, Cantine Leonardo, Cecchi, Piccini and Il Grappolo. "When I think about excellence in winemaking, I think about Italy", Zachariassen pointed out, "and to the incredible contribution that Brunello winemakers have given to the sector". Starting from the end of 2017, will also introduce the possibility for its Italian users to buy wine through the app itself, an opportunity that the app has already given to its users in other foreign markets.

Focus

Present & future of Sicily's "wine continent"

The definition of Sicily as a "wine continent" is surely a valid one, but, as befits any complex system, it is also a work in progress, where some styles are still being defined, as well as the true vocation of its territories, like Menfi, Pantelleria, Noto or Siracusa. And Sicilian wines, as showcased by the 2017 edition of Assovini's "Sicilia en primeur" on the 2016 vintage - an interesting one, as it usually is when summer heat is not too strong - reflect that (<https://goo.gl/XoK5Jq>). Still, Etna shines as its most prestigious territory, while being more affordable than Langhe or Tuscany - but still costing about 100-150.000 Euros per hectare. Production is around 3 million bottles, and prices are high, but land is scarce, and interest is focusing on the southwest side, while some would like to widen the denomination: but existing producers are not happy about the idea (our best tastings from the volcano <https://goo.gl/s405av>). Lastly, a new top name has come to Etna: after some of the island's most important producers, "the king of Barbaresco", Angelo Gaja, has bought 21 hectares, 15 for Nerello Mascalese, on the southeast side of Etna with Sicilian vintner Alberto Graci.



Wine & Food

The "Giro d'Italia" bike race's ever-deeper bond with wine

Yesterday, the 100th edition of the "Giro d'Italia" bike race started from Alghero: the official dinner of the "pink race" was hosted by prestigious Sardinian winemaker Sella & Mosca, owned by the Terra Moretti group. The same Vittorio Moretti who is President of the Consortium of Franciacorta, and its territory, according to rumors, will be featured in the 2018 edition of the "Giro", with another "wine time trial", after May 16th's "Sagrantino stage" between Foligno and Montefalco (and, from years past, Montalcino, Barbaresco-Barolo, Treviso-Valdobbiadene and the "Chianti Classico Stage").

For the record

An award for Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte

German wine & food magazine "Feinschmecker" gave its "Wine Award for Friends" to the Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte association of 13 high-tier producers of Veneto: it's

the first time that the award went to an Italian entity, and the Famiglie was chosen because of their being a strong, cohesive group for the promotion of Valpolicella's wine.

