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News



Antinori growing again

Renowned Tuscan wine powerhouse Antinori has invested more in the area of Siena, namely in the Chianti Colli Senesi territory, by acquiring Tenuta Farneta in Sinalunga, near Cortona, where the firm already owns Tenuta La Braccessa. Needless to say, this is an important development for the Antinori family and group, especially in light of its previous ownerships, and after a bidding war against another Italian wine heavyweight, Frescobaldi, ending in an offer of 5.5 million Euros. The estate was sold through the Courthouse of Siena, and includes 100 hectares in a single plot of land, a villa built in the 1800s, three small farms and the winery itself.



Lugana & Allegrini

Lugana, between Veneto and Lombardy, is an often overlooked wine territory, but 80% of its production (15 million bottles, for a market value of over 66 million Euros) goes abroad (40% in Germany alone). Now, after its 50th birthday, it seems to be living a second youth of sorts. One of its 1.586 hectares of vineyards sells for around 250.000 Euros, and its output, which hinges on Trebbiano di Lugana, is routinely sold out. Traditionally wineries from Veneto, particularly Valpolicella, have controlled it and investments keep on coming, the latest being Santa Margherita's acquisition of Ca' Maiol in 2017. Furthermore, as WineNews rumours have it, the next big name to invest in Lugana should be none other than Valpolicella's Allegrini (more than 150 hectares in Veneto, Montalcino and Bolgheri)...

Report

Downy mildew deciphered

San Michele all'Adige's Edmund Mach Foundation, one of the most advanced Italian research institutes on viticulture and agriculture, particularly on the genetic level, has sequenced, and therefore deciphered, the genetic code of Plasmopara Viticola, the pathogen that causes downy mildew, a pathology that creates heavy damage in vineyards worldwide each year. The findings were recently published in the latest number of the prestigious "Scientific Reports" magazine, which belongs to "Nature".



First Page

Families-Consortium still fighting in Valpolicella

All parties, at least on paper, say that they want to close the books on the matter as fast as possible, for the sake of the territory. In the meantime, though, more news keeps coming from Valpolicella regarding the clash between the Consortium of Valpolicella Wines and the Amarone Families, the association of 13 historical brands of Amarone. On the eve of the Amarone Preview (Feb. 3rd-5th, Verona), which will also celebrate 50 years of the denomination, the Families have stated that the EU's Office on Intellectual Property, or EUIPO, "has ruled once more in favour of the European Brand "A Amarone Families - Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte", reiterating its validity in classes 33 (wines) and 43 (catering), and rejecting the Consortium of Valpolicella's request for annulment", after a similar ruling in the past months, but in classes 35 (advertising) and 41 (education). "It should be pointed out once more", the Families association officially stated, "that when it comes to PDOs, European law trumps the national law of a member State". The first ruling of EUIPO, furthermore, came before the Courthouse of Venice ruling which, to all extents and purposes, supported the position of the Consortium, forcing the "Famiglie Storiche" (at the time, named the "Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte") to change their name and not use the trademark itself. "This confirms that the European trademark and the label "Le Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte" are perfectly legal, and this last EUIPO ruling strengthens our position not only in the EU, but towards the Courts of Appeals of Venice as well", stated Maria Sabrina Tedeschi, President of the Families. Meanwhile the private association, while waiting for the verdict of the next ruling from the Italian judiciary, has stated that it will respect "the Italian first decree ruling, in order not to create pointless controversies that would damage the Denomination". This is an important decision, and one that should hopefully see the Families and the Consortium reach a shared solution, for the good of the entirety of Valpolicella, one of Italian wine's most important territories.

Focus

"Wine Enthusiast" Vintage Chart

Just in case one had set aside a wonderful 2002 Barbaresco for just the right occasion and still thinks about it from time to time, well, the time has come to open it, as from now on it will be declining with each passing day. On the other hand, that 1996 Barolo that you completely forgot about might still bring great surprises, and waiting a bit more might even be a good idea for one of Langa's best vintages in the last 25 years. To while away the wait, then, one could uncork a bottle of the 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 or 2001 vintages of Brunello di Montalcino and Amarone della Valpolicella, because they're peaking right now. Additionally, should you come across an old bottle of Lugana, Soave or Verdicchio, don't use it to cook with, since some vintages just might surprise you. These are just some of the many examples of the myriad of rules and exceptions that govern the vintages of global wine, and it's impossible to remember them all if you don't have a photographic memory, or else the "Wine Enthusiast" Vintage Chart, a guide to the quality and drinking potential of wines the world over, from 1992 to 2016, including many Italian wines.

Appellation/Type	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Barbaresco	94	92	92	92	93	90
Barolo	94	93	86	94	93	93
	92	91	82	91	92	92
Soave Classico/Lugana	92	90	85	90	90	91
Whites	90	90	84	89	91	91
Whites	90	90	85	89	92	92
Franciacorta	90	90	85	89	92	90
Bolgheri	91	91	85	91	93	93
Chianti Classico	92	92	83	91	91	92
Brunello di Montalcino	93	91	83	91	92	93
Maremma	90	90	84	91	90	90
Reds	91	90	83	89	90	90
Verdicchio	90	90	86	89	91	90
Conero/Rosso Piceno	91	90	83	89	88	90
Reds	87	90	83	88	90	90
Reds	92	90	84	89	92	92
Whites	92	91	86	92	92	92
Aglianico del Vulture	90	90	82	89	91	92
Reds	88	90	82	89	90	90
Reds	93	92	93	88	92	91
Whites	91	91	84	89	90	90
Reds	91	91	84	90	91	91



Wine & Food

Cecchi to distribute Poggio Antico, sets sights on Montalcino

While waiting to set up shop on its own in Montalcino (which, as WineNews rumours have it, is imminent), the Cecchi group, one of the main names in Italian wine, 125 years of activity under its belt under the ownership of the Cecchi family, has invested in distribution. After the Champagne brand RM Collard Picard (since 2011), Alto Adige winery Castelfeder (2015) and the two German names Sorentberg and Julius Treis (since 2015), it will now distribute the wines of Poggio Antico, one of the leading names of Brunello di Montalcino (like it did, until last year, with Castiglion del Bosco) in Italy.

For the record

San Felice officially invests in Bolgheri

Recently there have been important investments in Barolo, Montalcino and Bolgheri, and San Felice (Allianz group) has officially invested as well, purchasing 6 hectares in the Bolgheri denomination, adding to the 140 hectares in its HQ in Chianti Classico, 20 in Montalcino's Campogiovanni and 50 of Perolla, in Maremma.

