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*Event scheduled at Veronafiere 14-17 April*

**VINITALY 2024: EXHIBITION OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED. THE EXHIBITION BRAND PROMOTING ITALIAN WINE FURTHER IMPROVES ITS INTERNATIONAL POSITIONING**

**VERONAFIERE-ICE FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY HAVE INVESTED 3 MILLION EUROS IN A PROMOTION PLAN AND INCOMING CAMPAIGN**

**Verona, 19 February 2024.** Wine from all the Italian regions as well as more than 30 other countries will be on show at the **56th Vinitaly** scheduled at Veronafiere next 14-17 April.

The Exhibition Centre is ready with a net show area of more than 180,000 square meters to become the international wine business forum with attendance already confirmed by 4,000 wineries. This consolidated turnout by exhibitors confirms the central status of the International Wine and Spirits Exhibition as it increasingly targets the needs of companies and promotion of the sector in Italy itself as well as on established and emerging international markets.

Veronafiere's new strategic "One 2024-2026" business plan also takes this direction. It envisages further strengthening of Vinitaly's mission focused on amplifying the brand's promotional platform in order to ensure, at the same time, incoming investments for the event and product Italian wines on the most strategic export markets, thanks to even more widespread involvement of Veronafiere precisely in these areas. In addition, the qualitative selection process of trade operators launched for the 55th Show in 2023 continues, with an extraordinary recruiting programme that brought 29,600 international operators from 143 countries to Verona (out total attendance of 93,000 visitors), including more than one thousand top buyers chosen and hosted by Veronafiere and ICE-Trade Agency. Eleven thousand appointments between exhibitors and buyers were scheduled through the Vinitaly Plus platform, in addition to those agreed in person between companies and operators.

At the same time, Vinitaly 2024 also welcomed the 28th **SOL**, the International olive oil trade show (Area C); **Xcellent Beers** (Area C) and the 25th **Enolitech**, the International exhibition of wine, oil and beer production technologies (Show Hall F). **These three events combined** bring the number of companies hosted in the 17 show halls overall to almost**4,300** (figure as of today).

The off-show **Vinitaly and the City** event specifically for wine lovers returns 12-15 April 2024 to the city centre of Verona, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There were more than 45,000 tastings by wine enthusiasts in 2023.

**The 13th Vinitaly Opera Wine** event (Gallerie Mercatali, Saturday 13 April). Wine Spectator and Veronafiere has selected 131 producers for the 13th edition of Vinitaly Opera Wine, the preview event for the international exhibition that every year highlights the ambassadors and iconic labels of Italian wine in the United States. There will be 3 débuts on 13 April compared to the 2023 selection, joined by 6 companies returning to the list after absence last year. Tuscany, with 33 producers, is once again the leading region, while second and third places of the podium are also confirmed, respectively taken by Piedmont (19 companies) and the Veneto (18), followed in turn by Sicily up to 16 cellars from 10 in 2023. And if two out of three selected producers come from "flagship regions" of Italian wine, looking at the country's overall wine-making geography, coverage sees the North in front (43%), followed by Central Italy (33%) and the South and Islands (24%).

The layout theme for Vinitaly Operawine 2024: opera was inscribed this year in the UNESCO Intangible Heritage and is a symbol of Verona throughout the world thanks to the Arena Opera Festival.

**The run-up to Vinitaly 2024: internationalization and the incoming campaign**. The calendar of international events organised by Vinitaly-Veronafiere in collaboration with ICE-Foreign Trade Agency - which began in September last year to strengthen loyalty and attract operators, distributors, top buyers and the international press to promote Italian wine in a systematic way - will conclude on 19 March in Brussels. A world tour involving **17 stop-offs taking in trade fairs, previews and roadshows** in North America, Europe, the Far East, the Balkans and Brazil involving an investment by Veronafiere-ICE Foreign Trade Agency of **3 million euros**. The trailblazer for the project promoting Italian wine and the wine fair brand was the **Vinitaly China Roadshow in Beijing, Changsha and Hangzhou**, followed by **Wine South America (September 2023), Vinitaly Chicago** (1st edition, October 2023)**,** the event dedicated to wine & food professionals in the Midwest of the USA, and **Wine Vision by Open Balkan**, the second edition of the largest wine fair in south-east Europe (November 2023). The Vinitaly Roadshow format will travel again to the USA in March, stopping off in Houston and New York (4 & 7 March).

As regards Vinitaly Previews, i.e. the "buyer hunting" promotional effectors by Veronafiere in cooperation with the system of Italian Chamber of Commerce abroad and Italian Embassies, the series attracted operators, buyers and the trade press in **Switzerland**(September 2023), **Germany** (November), **Denmark** December), **South Korea, Japan, Sweden** and **Austria** (all in January 2024) and, lastly, **London** (February). The last appointment is scheduled in Brussels on 19 March.

**The main theme areas at Vinitaly 2024.** Intercept consumer trends and ensure evolutionary representation of the sector in line with market needs: There are two of the objectives underlying Vinitaly's theme areas which, once again this year, highlight many supply-demand matching approaches increasingly driven by an international scope.

- **Organic Hall** (Area C, new location - 9th edition): the exhibition dedicated to certified organic wine from Italy and abroad through the Bio Enoteca-Organic Wine Showcase;

- **International Wine Hall** (Hall D): the show area hosting foreign wine-making countries with France (and especially its Champagne *maisons*) ready to expand its exhibition showcase at Vinitaly. Companies involved in the Open Balkan project (Serbia, Albania and North Macedonia), Georgia, Hungary, Brazil, Armenia, South Africa and Greece will also be in attendance.

- **Mixology** (1st floor Palaexpo): the exhibition section showcasing the art of cocktails and mixing with wines, liqueurs and spirits inspired by new international trends. The programme over the four days of the event also includes masterclasses guided by the most talented and trend-setting bartenders.

- **Micro Mega Wines – Micro Size, Mega Quality** (Area C, new position - 3rd edition). The exhibition section under the banner of "small is beautiful" created for Vinitaly by wine writer Ian D'Agata. Limited edition niche wines are at the heart of this project.

**The main tastings at Vinitaly 2024.**

From exclusive *Grand Tastings* to masterclasses guided by the most important international wine magazines, by way of events focusing on *MicroMega Wines*, small-scale, extremely high quality Italian wines through to consolidated *walk around tasting* events. The Vinitaly tasting calendar, which will bring the show halls at Veronafiere to life 14-17 April, is a journey through the Italy of wine with a window also on to the world. The schedule for the 56th International Wine and Spirits Exhibition confirms the global tastings in the International Wine Hall and the **Vinitaly Tasting**–**The Doctor Wine Selection** (Show Hall 10 every day) curated by Daniele Cernilli, editor of the Essential Guide to Italian Wines particularly intended for buyers and the horeca sector. There is also space for **Young to Young** (14, 15 & 16 April – Meeting Room A, 1st floor, Show Hall 10) - tastings where young winemakers tell their stories to young wine communicators under the direction of food&wine journalists Paolo Massobrio and Paolo Gatti - as well as tastings focusing on certified organic wines in the *Organic Hall* in collaboration with **FederBio** and **Vi.Te**. The line-up also includes **Beyond DOC Wines** (14 April at 15:00, Tulipano Meeting Room, Palaexpo), the tasting celebrating the **50 years** of magazine **Civiltà del Bere**, not to mention the numerous tasting occasions organised by exhibitors, consortia and associations.

**Grand Tasting**. The spotlights will turn on the series of super tastings organized by Vinitaly that this year features Italian sparkling wines in “**Cool under pressure - Italy's sparkling world**” curated by Master of Wine Gabriele Gorelli (15 April 11:00 – Tulipano Meeting Room, Palexpo), and some of the most representative denominations on the Italian wine scene with “**The Four Big 'B's of Italian Wine: Barbaresco, Barolo, Bolgheri and Brunello**” guided by Ian D'Agata (16 April 11:00, Argento Meeting Room, Palaexpo), one of the most expert wine writers in the world, who also ideally travels to the land of the Dragon with “**Italy-China: There and back: A journey discovering new worlds of wine**” (17 April 11:00, Argento Meeting Room, Palaexpo). “**Italy's great native wines”** are the focus of the tasting conducted by oenologist Riccardo Cotarella (16 April at 15:00, Argento Meeting Room, Palaexpo), while Masters of Wine Andrea Lonardi and Gabriele Gorelli with wine educator and MW candidate Cristina Mercuri debate "**The Three Musketeers**” (14 April at 15:00, Iris Meeting Room, Palaexpo).

**Walk around tastings and Tasting Ex…Press**. The tasting programme will be as customary with the Tre Bicchieri *walk around tasting* by **Gambero Rosso** (Sunday 14 April 11:00-16:30 in the Argento Meeting Room, Palaexpo), followed by the **Orange Wine Festival** event (Monday 15 April 11:00-18:00, Argento Meeting Room, Palaexpo) and the **AIS** tasting (Wednesday 17 April 11:00-15:00, Tulipano Meeting Room, Palaexpo). *Tasting Ex…Press* returns with all the events conducted by the international trade press in collaboration with Vinitaly, from the **International Wine & Spirit Competition**(15 April at 15:00, Iris Meeting Room, Palaexpo) to **Decanter** (14 April at 15:00, Meeting Room A, 1st floor, show hall 10), **Weinwirtschaft** (15 April at 15:00, Meeting Room A, 1st floor, show hall 10) and **Gilbert & Gaillard** (16 April at 15:00, Meeting Room A, 1st floor, show hall 10), as well as **Vinum** (14 April, 15:00, Meeting Room B, 1st floor, show hall 10), **Revija Vino** (16 April at 11:00, Meeting Room B, 1st floor, show hall 10) and **Seminario Permanente Veronelli** (16 April, 15:00. Meeting Room B, 1st floor, show hall 10).

**SOL - International olive oil trade show.**

The 28th Sol returns to its origins, once again becoming the International Olive Oil Trade Show, a show hall dedicated exclusively to olive oil. Objective: create further business opportunities through targeted initiatives, improve the positioning of existing opportunities and expand attendance by exhibitors and professional visitors. New features include **the expansion of the merchandise on display,** starting with "green gold" derivatives, such as table olives, pickles and spreads based on extra virgin olive oil, through to flavoured olive oils and even cosmetic and nutraceutical products.

There will also be changes for the **Sol d'Oro International Competition**, now at its 22nd edition (Verona, 11-18 March 2024). The event has a "blind tasting" format involving a highly qualified international jury, thereby ranking as one of the most selective competitions of its kind.

**Enolitech**

Enolitech - the international exhibition for technological innovation applied to wine-growing, olive growing and beverage - celebrates 25 editions by expanding its area by more than 3,000 m2 to cover 7,600 m2 in total (Show Hall F). Around 150 exhibitors have confirmed their attendance, with 10% from abroad, especially China, Spain, France, Hungary, Taiwan and Poland.

***Competitions and guides.***

**New:  Vinitaly Design Award**

The Vinitaly Design International Packaging Competition that awards the best packaging - on the occasion of its 28th edition - changes its name to the **Vinitaly Design Award**. In addition to the new name, innovations also impact the competition regulations which now have a new format with changes to the voting system. The winners will be rewarded on Saturday 13 April during the Gala Evening at the Ristori Theatre in Verona.

**5 Star Wines - The Book**

5 Star Wines – The Book - wines selected by Veronafiere in collaboration with Assoenologi - celebrates its eighth edition. This three-day blind tasting event (9-11 April) involving a panel of expert judges culminates with the drafting of the Guide of the same name listing all the wines obtaining a score equal to or higher than 90/100. The book also includes the special **Wine Without Walls** section dedicated to certified organic or bio-dynamic wines. The guide is available in English in digital and printed formats.

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