

TASTING FUTURES

Anteprima Brunello di Montalcino

One of Italy's most sought after wines, Brunello di Montalcino, branched off from other producers to hold its own Anteprima for the international press in November. No-one knows the character of Brunello di Montalcino as well as Bindocci, MD of the historic Il Poggione winery and three-time president of the Consorzio del vino Brunello di Montalcino. Following the tastings, Michele Shah caught up with him to ask a few key questions.

Vintage 2017 has not been easy due to extreme climatic conditions. What are its main characteristics?

This vintage reminds me of vintage 1975 which after careful ageing and re-tasting gave some excellent results. Great red wines are not just crafted in the winery, they need careful vineyard management. Brunello di Montalcino, which is made with 100% Sangiovese, does well planted at good altitudes. If the weather is too hot, careful pruning is necessary in order to leave enough foliage to protect the grapes from the harshness of the sun. Vintage 2017 offers more drinkable wines

at an earlier age, and I am sure it will offer some great surprises in time.

What makes Brunello di Montalcino such a sought-after wine?

The backbone of a wine is acidity and we look to making wine that has the right freshness, complexity



Fabrizio Bindocci, president of the Consorzio del vino Brunello di Montalcino

and balance. A wine that can age but one that also gives a lot of pleasure to drink. For the 2017 vintage it was unanimously decided to lower production from 10 million bottles to 7.5 million bottles. Fewer bottles make it more desirable.

What are you doing in the face of climate change?

Our area of production is sustainable. It encompasses a territory of 32,000 hectares, of which 4,300 ha are planted to vines. The rest is woodland, grain, olives and pasture land. Montalcino has always been characterized by its biodiversity and today 50% of our producers are

certified organic.

Regarding international exports, where do you place India?

India, like all of Asia, is a growing market, but we need to create more awareness and make sure that discerning wine lovers understand the greatness of our terroir and wines through education to these markets of the future.

New Wine Policy for Maharashtra

According to press reports, the Maharashtra cabinet is considering a new draft wine policy for the State to be put into place from January 2022 and replace the existing policy, which was drafted 20 years ago and lapsed in December 2021.

The government is expected to impose 10% excise duty on wine sales, 50% of which is proposed to be used for the development of the wine industry. The cabinet is also discussing the industry's demand to allow sale of wine at supermarkets, permission to sell wine on dry days, lowering of the legal age for drinking wine to 21 years and permission to sell wine on e-commerce platforms and through apps. There is also a demand for starting exclusive wine shops instead of the wine and beer shop licenses given currently.

The All India Wine Producers' Association (AIWPA) has drafted a policy that aims to increase the 'free flow of wine' in the state as well as increase the size of the wine industry five-fold in the next five years from its present level of Rs 1,000 crore.

Source Economic Times