

Press Release
For Immediate Release

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OperaWine 2024: Vinitaly premieres with Italy's 'Finest Wines'

Veronafiere and Vinitaly in collaboration with *Wine Spectator*, the world's leading wine magazine, launched Vinitaly 2024 at an exclusive premiere event that brought together producers of Italy's finest wines with an invited audience of influential figures from the world of wine. Once again this year, the invite-only event was held at the former Gallerie Mercatali and showcased the very best in Italian wine.



OperaWine 2024 returned to Verona on April 13th 2024, bringing together the worlds of wine and opera

The thirteenth edition of OperaWine, *Finest Italian Wines: Great Producers selected by Wine Spectator*, was held on **13 April** at the site of the former Gallerie Mercatali, an imposing post-industrial site that has been revitalized as a stunning conference and exhibition space. **131 top producers**, selected by the American magazine *Wine Spectator*, were invited to share their wines with an exclusive audience of **invited international journalists, sommeliers, wine experts, ambassadors and educators**.

Following the arrival of producers at their stands in the late morning and a delightful light lunch, the official program continued with a welcome speech by representatives from Wine Spectator: Jeffery Lindenmuth, Alison Napjus, and Bruce Sanderson. Following this, Matteo Zoppas, President of the Italian Trade Agency, and Maurizio Danese, Managing Director of Veronafiere, shared their perspectives on the significance and impact of OperaWine. The event continued with three musical performances celebrating this year's theme of opera, featuring maestro Federico Brunello on the piano, soprano Sara Cortolezzis, and tenor Riccardo Rados, supported by Fondazione Arena di Verona.

After the annual group photo with all the producers, Federico Bricolo, President of Veronafiere, and Damiano Tommasi, Mayor of Verona, appeared, alongside Prefect of Verona Demetrio Martino. Notable political figures including Gianmarco Mazzi, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture, and Francesco Lollobrigida, Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty, and Forestry, also shared their insights, bringing the welcoming speeches to a close.

At 1:20 pm, the ribbon-cutting ceremony officially marked the start of the thirteenth edition of OperaWine. The arrival of VIP guests, including Italian Wine Ambassadors, 5Star Wines judges, and ITA Buyers, at 1:30 pm, was followed by the general guests' arrival at 2:30 pm, heralding the beginning of an exciting Grand Tasting session.

Once again, the event **demonstrated the great diversity of Italian wine, showcasing the excellence of Italian wine** to a domestic and international audience. The prestigious tasting once again saw red wines taking center stage, representing 99 out of 131 references, followed by 22 still whites, 8 sparkling wines, and 2 sweet wines.

Commenting on this year's event, **Bruce Sanderson of Wine Spectator**, said: *"It's quite an honour, one of the highlights of my time in Italy has been watching OperaWine prosper and grow. From our first edition and the tasting of the finest Italian wines in 2012 we've expanded the tasting from 100 to 130 producers showcasing the breadth and diversity and high quality of Italian wine."*

Alison Napjus of Wine Spectator added: *"Both Bruce and I truly enjoy tasting and writing about Italian wines because it allows us to dive much deeper into Italy, to go beyond the wines themselves, to travel here to Verona for Vinitaly or to the regions we cover, to meet the people behind the wines and to soak in all the atmosphere and beauty of Italy."*



Stevie Kim, Managing Partner of Vinitaly, said: *“With this year's design concept centered around Opera, our intention was to reconnect with our origins. It is of utmost importance to express our gratitude to Fondazione Arena, who gently provided their photogallery for the event. We feel profoundly privileged to have collaborated with them this year.”*

Reflecting on the success of the event, **Federico Bricolo, President of VeronaFiere**, said: *“OperaWine, which is undoubtedly an internationally renowned event, is the only initiative that Wine Spectator undertakes outside the United States. An international event that today, thanks to Minister Lollobrigida, becomes even more international here”*

Maurizio Danese, CEO of VeronaFiere added: *“The partnership with Wine Spectator, which since 2012 has chosen us as their exclusive event, is increasingly strategic and fits into the plan for further international development of the event. Operawine doesn't just celebrate Italian wine, it sets a critical platform to promote our wines in the USA. For Veronafiere this event is transforming into an important foreign market opportunity.”*

Integral to the event's success were the partners who supported the tasting. These include Institutional Partners, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, the Italian Trade Agency; Official Partners, UniCredit, Generali and its business unit Cattolica; Sponsors Well Com and Tannico; Mobility Partner, Air Dolomiti; OperaWine's Official Cheese, Consorzio Tutela Formaggio Asiago DOP and Technical Partners, San Benedetto, Renato Bosco, Salumi Coati, Caffè Morettino, Amedei Toscana, Terra & Cuore, Pulltex and Valledoro.

About Vinitaly:

Vinitaly 2024 was held from April 14th to the 17th. This 56th edition counted 97,000 visitors of which 30,070 were top international buyers from 140 different countries. The première event to Vinitaly, OperaWine “Finest Italian Wines: Great Producers Selected by Wine Spectator” which was held on the 13th of April, one day prior to Vinitaly, unites international wine professionals, offering them the unique opportunity to discover and taste the wines of the 131 Best Italian Producers, as selected by Wine Spectator. Since 1998 Vinitaly travels to several countries thanks to its strategic arm abroad, Vinitaly International. In February 2014 Vinitaly with Vinitaly International launched an educational project, the Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) with the aim of divulging and broadcasting the excellence and diversity of Italian wine around the globe. VIA this year launched the 27th edition of its Certification Course. To date, there are 394 Certified Italian Wine Ambassadors of which 16 are also Italian Wine Experts.

About Wine Spectator:

Wine Spectator is the world's leading authority on wine. Anchored by Wine Spectator magazine, a print publication that reaches around 3 million readers worldwide, the brand also encompasses the Web's most comprehensive wine site (WineSpectator.com), mobile platforms and a series of signature tasting events. Wine Spectator examines the world of wine from the vineyard to the table, exploring wine's role in contemporary culture and delivering expert reviews of more than 10,000 wines each year. Parent company M. Shanken Communications, Inc., also publishes Cigar Aficionado, Whisky Advocate, Market Watch, Shanken News Daily and Shanken's Impact Newsletter.