

Mailing List  
Art.2 paragraph 20/D  
law 662/96 - Siena (I)  
Informative publication  
on the estates of the  
SAIAGRICOLA S.p.A. Group  
General manager:  
GUIDO SODANO



This publication  
is in association  
with the Italian Periodical  
Printing Union.

# SAIAGRICOLA News

YEAR 11 - N° 1  
APRIL 2010

PERIODIC INFORMATION FROM SAIAGRICOLA S.p.A.

**p. 2**

**Gambero Rosso Tre Bicchieri Awards: the American view**

**p. 3**

**Italian Wine Masters: New York and Chicago**

**p. 4**

**Brunello: a retrospective on the 1999 vintage.  
The Wine Spectator nominates La Poderina as one of the top wines**

**p. 5**

**Anteprima Vino Nobile and Benvenuto Brunello**

**p. 6**

**Cascina Veneria: official supplier to Gualtiero Marchesi's ALMA School**

**p. 7**

**Scientific Conference at Cascina Veneria**

SAIAGRICOLA...**NATURALLY**

# CÒLPETRONE WINES IN NEW YORK: **The Big Apple seen through the eyes of Sagrantino**

At the “Tre Bicchieri Gambero Rosso” tour in USA, Còlpetrone presented Montefalco Sagrantino 2006 and Gold 2005: a continuing success story!

## Gambero Rosso®

The Vini d'Italia and Tre Bicchieri presentations have become an event not to be missed in New York since the mid-nineties.

**The welcome shown by The Big Apple to the best of the Italian wine scene is quite simply extraordinary.** On February 22nd the award winners from the 23rd edition of the guide drew a record number of trade and public visitors, **over 1800 people**, to Manhattan's Metropolitan Pavilion.

The early session (from midday until 4 pm) was reserved for the journalists, importers, wine shop owners, restaurateurs and sommeliers of New York to meet the producers. From 4 until 7 pm wine lovers from outside the trade were allowed in to taste the wines and buy copies of the 2010 Guide to Italian Wines which has become the reference point for the sale of Italian wines in the USA. **The mood of the exhibitors was one of cautious optimism.** “The worst of the recession is over” we were told, “but consumers have become much more careful. They're not prepared to spend \$50 per bottle lightly. The wine has to be a recognized classic and it must be for a special occasion.” **Consumption is slowly increasing though not yet to the levels of four years ago.** Italian producers can confirm that demand, while for less onerous prices, is still for quality product. Yet meanwhile, wines from all over the world hit the shelves at less than five dollars. At the same time antipathy towards French wines from the American public seems to be growing and the crisis (sales are 28% down) is even affecting champagne. **However the Italian restaurant sector in New York remains in a healthy state and a vital channel for sales of quality Italian wine-** as the number of restaurateurs attending the event tends to corroborate. Amongst those present, in addition to trade journalists, were Massimo Magliaro President of the Rai Corporation, Gerardo Greco Rai's New York correspondent, Rabbi Umberto Piperno, the musician Mimmo Locasciulli, Alessandra Farkas from the Corriere della Sera, International Editor Emanuele Bevilacqua, Carlo Mantica and Giancarlo Galletto from Mantica Ventures, Marco Alberto from the Italian Consulate, Carlo Formosa and Ruggero Corrias from the Italian press delegation ONU.



(text: Marco Sabellico taken from [www.gamberorosso.it](http://www.gamberorosso.it))

# Italian Wine Masters:Vino Nobile “Antica Chiusina” and Brunello are major players in the USA.

We are drinking less but choosing what we drink with more care. In Chicago and New York, the first stages on the Italian Wine Masters Tour which aims to maximise visibility in the important american market, we witness a refined market which, notwithstanding the crisis, is looking for top quality wine.

The Italian Wine Masters



Chicago and New York were the first stages on the American Tour where the latest releases of the great wines of Tuscany- Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico and Vino Nobile di Montepulciano- together with Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superior- were shown to press and trade alike.

**This is an event of major importance designed to capture the attention of one of the most influential markets for Italian wine: a success story due to both consumers and distributors alike. Fattoria del Cerro was represented by Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Antica Chiusina, a wine which conti-**

**nues to delight and surprise wine lovers, a real champion of the cause prized for its elegance and structure.** Despite the crisis, the american consumer is being more selective about purchasing wine, compelling evidence that we are drinking less but choosing what we drink with more care. **La Poderina Brunello made conquests too: we sent the 2005 vintage as a sort of “preview of the preview” given that Brunello di Montalcino 2005 was only put on show three weeks later at the Benvenuto Brunello event.** This had double significance in that during 2009 more bottles of the Made In Italy brand were bought and consumed across the various continents than those from our traditional rivals in France: a true milestone! Regarding bottled wine, Italy remains the country to watch- further proof that the american wine-drinker is looking for top quality wine (Source: The Italian Food & Wine Institute).

**The New York event was graced by the presence of Gianfranco Fini from the House of Deputies who wanted to say hello to those taking part and to thank them for their efforts to support and promote the excellence of our winemaking industry.**



# Brunello grows up



A retrospective view of the 1999 vintage for Brunello:  
Nature remains constant!

“Dark and beautiful with wonderful concentration of fruit. Long and caressing.” This is how James Suckling described our Brunello di Montalcino La Poderina from the 1999 vintage in the February 2010 edition of *The Wine Spectator*.

It is said that a criminal always returns to the scene of his crime. So **James Suckling and *The Wine Spectator* took another look at the 1999 vintage**, because in the words of Suckling himself: “It has always lived in the shadow of the legendary 1997. While the hillside vineyards of Montalcino may have produced some of the best grapes in the region and some of the most powerful sangiovese ever made came from this vintage, 1999 was not bookmarked by many wine lovers. So ten years on, you can still find examples on the shelves or on restaurant lists at sensible prices, so it is well worth seeking out.”

**At La Poderina, we like to think we know every last centimetre of our 24 hectares of vineyard so we were aware from the**

**beginning that this promised to be an excellent vintage which would improve with time.** This goes to show that nothing happens by chance: thanks to a winemaking philosophy which believes in innovation to maintain tradition, the wines from La Poderina are aged in french oak barriques as well large botti. In the vineyard, training systems which favour top quality

with yields of around 60 quintals per hectare- well below the 80 quintals permitted under production regulations- planting density at around 5000 plants per hectare and a medium compact, clay-based soil with fossils present, do the rest! **The result? 96/100 and a wine described as “Dark and beautiful with wonderful concentration of fruit. Long and caressing.”** The estate, equipped with two guest rooms in the classic, reconstructed stone building, lies in the middle of the famous Brunello di Montalcino vineyards overlooking the evocative abbey of Sant’Antimo and bears further witness to what you’ll find in the bottle. Saiagricola quality is built to last and indeed improves with time. If you’re lucky enough to find a few bottles of the 1999, try for yourself and see. **Because Nature remains constant and we were pleased that *The Wine Spectator* knows that too.**

RETROSPECTIVE				
Top-Scoring Wines From the 1999 Brunello Retrospective				
More than 40 Brunellos di Montalcino from the 1999 vintage were reviewed for this report. A free alphabetical list of all wines tasted is available at <a href="http://www.winespectator.com/022809">www.winespectator.com/022809</a> , where WineSpectator.com members can also access complete reviews for the wines.				
WINE	SCORE	RELEASE PRICE	AUCTION PRICE	
Eredi Fuligni Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 1999 Offers wonderful citrus peel, ripe berry and floral aromas, with superexotic fruit.	99	\$124	NA	
Fanti Brunello di Montalcino 1999 Concentrated, layered and dense, with loads of powerful fruit. Spellbinding.	98	\$80	\$87	
Casanova di Neri Brunello di Montalcino Cerretalto 1999 Integrated and beautiful, voluptuous and long, with ripe fruit, licorice and jam.	97	\$125	NA	
Marchesi de' Frescobaldi Brunello di Montalcino Castelgiocondo Ripe al Convento Riserva 1999 Superb, with fantastic aromas, massive fruit and amazing concentration.	97	\$99	\$74	
Casanova di Neri Brunello di Montalcino Tenuta Nuova 1999 A powerful wine, with crushed blackberry, raisin, treacle tart and dark chocolate.	96	\$64	\$65	
La Poderina Brunello di Montalcino 1999 Dark and beautiful, with a wonderful concentration of fruit. Long and caressing.	96	\$70	NA	
La Geria Brunello di Montalcino Vigna gli Angeli Riserva 1999 Superaromatic, with cedar, sweet tobacco and berries. Balanced and refined.	95	\$99	NA	
Le Gode Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 1999 Full, soft and silky, with loads of fruit, yet subtle and refined. Solid and complete.	95	\$75	\$110	
Siro Pacenti Brunello di Montalcino 1999 Full and soft, with mushroom and blackberry notes and dense fruit.	95	\$85	NA	
Il Poggione Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 1999 Layered and flamboyant, with very opulent fruit, yet reserved and caressing.	95	\$60	NA	
Ruffino Brunello di Montalcino Il Greppone Mazzi Riserva 1999 Ripe and opulent, with currant, mineral and fresh herbs. Layered and stylish.	95	\$128	NA	
Valdicava Brunello di Montalcino Madonna del Piano Riserva 1999 Soft and delightful, subtle and rich, with fabulous aromas and ripe fruit.	94	\$125	NA	
Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino Poggio all'Oro 1999 Jam and dried berry on the nose verges on fruitcake. Velvety and opulent.	94	\$75	NA	
Castello Banfi Brunello di Montalcino Poggio alle Mura 1999 This has plenty of fruit, but it's reserved and gorgeous, with a beautiful texture.	94	\$150	NA	
Tenuta Carlina Brunello di Montalcino Togata dei Togati 1999 Dark, with toast, coffee and berry flavors. Long and superrich. A blockbuster style.	94	\$45	NA	
Sesta di Sopra Brunello di Montalcino 1999 Ripe and raisiny, with dried dark fruits and fresh flowers. Massive yet balanced.	94	\$75	NA	
La Velona Brunello di Montalcino 1999 Big and powerful, with sweet fruit, dried flowers, sliced mushroom and berries.	94	\$75	NA	

# The Anteprima Vino Nobile and Benvenuto Brunello: the eagerly awaited events...by the new vintages

The new vintages of **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano** from **Fattoria del Cerro** and **Brunello di Montalcino La Poderina** are presented to the public during the traditional events “Anteprima Vino Nobile” and “Benvenuto Brunello”



Photo above: Patrizia Crociani Saiagricola's Sales Director, the journalist Subhash Arora and Saiagricola's Managing Director Guido Sodano at the Fattoria del Cerro evening.



Photo: another moment from the evening organised by Fattoria del Cerro for the **Vino Nobile Preview**.

Every year the Saiagricola Group has included a selection from Fattoria del Cerro and La Poderina at these events; **both estates are among the leading properties in these famous denominations.**

The **Vino Nobile Preview** gave us the opportunity to show off the 2006 and 2007 vintages of **Antica Chiusina**, the wine which requires the longest aging period from the range. Meanwhile the Montalcino “debutants” came out at **Benvenuto Brunello**, the preview dedicated to the greatest wine of the area and surely one of the most highly rated wines of Italy.

The Montalcinese event ushered in the first appearance of the 2005 vintage and 2004 **Riserva** wines as well as **Rosso di Montalcino 2008**. These two events have been designed to show off new vintages but also and perhaps above all else to dedicate a moment of time to wine-lovers from all over the world who every year in their professional capacity focus their attention on the products of the Saiagricola brand. So sandwiched between them on February 18th, **Fattoria del Cerro held a conference for members of the press** from both home and abroad at the 16th century palace **La Grazianella** which lies at the heart of our Fattoria del Cerro estate. **Amongst the guests were Isao Miyajima, Kunio Bansho, Kei Murata and Noriko Matsumoto Inagaki** from Japan, **Dirk Rodriguez and Herwig Van Howe** from Belgium, the austrian journalist **Helmut Knall** and from India **Subhash Arora**; along with their fellow journalists from Italy they witnessed an unmissable event dedicated to absolute quality.

## Monterufoli and the wines of Val di Cornia

In excess of 100 people turned up to this gathering of restaurateurs at **Monterufoli**. A 1000 hectare estate in the **Val di Cornia**- once belonging to the family of **Count Ugolino della Gherardesca**- at the heart of which lie a delightful agriturismo and an innovative winery. What a setting for the presentation of our new releases!

On March 1st the annual meeting of Saiagricola customers took place at the **Villetta di Monterufoli**. Over a hundred people took part, eager to taste the new vintages of “**Malentrata**” **Val di Cornia Rosso DOC** and “**Redenzione**” **Vermentino di Toscana IGT**.



The wines were also available to try alongside a tasting of Saiagricola products over a lunch of risotto in the Villetta.

“We adopt a simple vinification process and the wine is none the worse for that” explained our enologist Lorenzo Landi. “We don’t use a whole range of the sort of techniques that are trendy these days; that would serve to compromise the authentic character of the wine. We prefer to use a straightforward system: we believe in a lengthy maceration using relatively

low, yet wide fermentors to maintain extended contact between solids and liquid without the need for remontage but succeeding nonetheless in achieving a gentle yet effective extraction to favour yeast autolysis and a natural softening of the wine.”

**It was a fitting occasion, apart from getting to know the product range, to become more familiar with the estate as a whole.**

In addition to the picturesque vineyards, there are a further 1000 hectares of unspoilt countryside with centuries old trees and an abundance of thermal springs. The centre of the estate lies where once stood an old warehouse for the storage of locally mined magnesium and lignite ores. Up until 1929 there was a railway and cable station for the mine trains though this has been closed now for over half a century. Count Ugolino della Gherardesca’s subjects used to live here; the very same person known through Dante’s Divine Comedy and the noble lord hereabouts of that time. Accommodation offered here lies close to the winery and is composed of various rooms and apartments which fit in perfectly with the beauty of the natural surroundings. As with the other Saiagricola estates...Naturally!



## Best Wishes Maestro!

Gualtiero Marchesi reaches 80: the best way to teach is by example.

Cascina Veneria is chosen as the official supplier to Gualtiero Marchesi’s ALMA School.

ALMA is the number one School for Italian Cookery at an international level; chefs, pastry cooks and sommeliers come from all over the world to study here and become true professionals thanks to the high quality teaching programmes and the authoritative staff. It is based in the splendid



Palazzo Ducale di Colorno in Parma and is equipped with the most technically advanced teaching aids for cookery, pastry-making and sommelier work. **And Cascina Veneria has been chosen as their official rice supplier! Our best wishes and most sincere thanks to one of the fathers of great cooking.**



Photo above: the prestigious ALMA building



# The Zagreb Gourmet Wine Festival

Alongside producers from Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, top local distributors and some of the best names from France, California, South Africa and Chile, Saiagricola presented Còlpetrone's Montefalco Sagrantino, Fattoria del Cerro's Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and La Poderina's Brunello di Montalcino.



Photo: Marco Castignani Public Relations Officer for Saiagricola with Croatia's Minister For Tourism Damir Bajs during his visit to the stand.

The Zagreb Wine Gourmet Festival, the most prestigious fair for our sector in Croatia, took place on February 12th and 13th in Zagreb. The trade is in ferment here, a young market with great potential. **There was a great response for Còlpetrone's Montefalco Sagrantino:** a distinctive and complex wine which aroused much curiosity and fascination. The group's other products were similarly well-received during the course of the exhibition: La Poderina's Brunello di Montalcino is already well-known and well-loved while the 2007 vintage of Fattoria del Cerro's Vino Nobile was given a "preview of the preview" for the many fans present, as well as the simply curious! **A success for Saiagricola ratified by the arrival of Croatia's Minister For Tourism Damir Bajs who wanted to visit the Saiagricola stand to make sure for himself that Italian wines can be of such high quality!**

## Rice: from cultivation to culinary tradition. An economic and nutritional breakdown



On April 17th a scientific conference organised by The Turin School Of Food Safety is to take place at Cascina Veneria, the subject "Rice: from cultivation to culinary tradition- an economic and nutritional breakdown".

**The meeting will examine the properties of rice bringing to light results from scientific research studies into identifying the mechanisms by which certain components of rice can either prevent or slow down the onset of carcinoma.**

The conference, opened by the Managing Director of Saiagricola Dr Guido

Sodano, will witness the delivery of papers by Prof. Calabrese, Università Cattolica del S. Cuore di Piacenza, Prof. Giacosa, Gruppo Sanitario Policlinico di Monza, Prof. Rondanelli, Università degli Studi di Pavia, Prof. Arlorio, Università del Piemonte Orientale, Prof. Tinarelli, Università di Torino, Prof. Carruba, President of Milano Ristorazione, Prof. Dachà, Università Campus Bio-Medico of Roma. Members of the panel are Prof. Mauri, Managing Director Fondazione Cerba Milano and Prof. D'Andrea, Director SCDO Novara.

**The meeting will be closed by one of the guests Prof. Veronesi.**



## The President of The Republic visits Vinality



Photo, from right: President Napolitano with Adviser Ruffo and Director Guido Sodano

Meeting the Minister of Agricultural Resources as well as the **newly appointed Governor of The Veneto Luca Zaia**, Sodano, this time in the guise of director of the Italian Rice Consorzio, tried to persuade the minister to adopt a more favourable position towards smaller scale rice producers in their opposition to larger scale operations over the **Karnak-Carnaroli debate and how to protect the image of the latter in the face of the confusion caused by the presence of its lower quality rival** (which is nonetheless a more productive variety). **"It's like allowing Brunello to be made from table grapes"** Sodano and Zaia decided, agreeing on a shared position over the drawing up of the law currently under discussion at Senate level to grant "protected product status" to indigenous rice varieties. **It is no great surprise to discover that Sig.ra Clio, a renowned gourmet, has exchanged Carnaroli-related views and recipes with Sodano who has promised to send some Carnaroli from Cascina Veneria to the presidential palace.** This is the same rice that which has recently been selected by ALMA, the Parma-based Cookery School under the tutelage of Masterchef Gualtiero Marchesi. Such a prestigious appointment has allowed Veneria to become the exclusive rice supplier to the greatly-respected school but who knows whether there might not be other conquests, perhaps in the Presidential Place, or maybe even the Vatican.

**Saiagricola? I know you, you're famous!** These were the first words addressed to Managing Director Guido Sodano by Giorgio Napolitano, President of The Italian Republic, during his visit to Verona. This was the first time a President of The Republic had visited Vinality. "I came to congratulate you because you are creating both riches and culture and wine is after all, first and foremost a cultural phenomenon. You're bringing greatness to our country and together we can help Italy grow. **Wine - continued the Head of State- is a symbol of the diversity and uniqueness of our country. Using the synergy of these two elements we need- just as Italy became united out of necessity - to adopt a systematic approach to an ever-changing world.** Greetings and good wishes which bring together both a word of thanks and a rallying call expressed with the wisdom and the the authority of a father figure.



Photo Guido Sodano and Governor Luca Zaia

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### APRIL

- 8-12 Vinality
- 19 Sagrantino Day International
- 24 Wine Spectator Grand Tour Las Vegas
- 30 Wine Spectator Grand Tour Washington

#### MAY

- 4 Wine Spectator Grand Tour New York
- 10-13 Cibus - Parma
- 21-24 Vini nel Mondo - Spoleto
- 24-25 The Nizza Preview
- 24-25 Benvenuto Brunello Baltic republics
- 18-20 London International Wine & Spirit Fair
- 30 Open Cellars -  
Fattoria del Cerro, Còlpetrone and Arbiola

#### JUNE

- 3 Gambero Rosso Tre Bicchieri Montreal
- 27-29 Fancy Food New York

## SAIAGRICOLA News

PERIODIC INFORMATION FROM SAIAGRICOLA S.p.A.

GRUPPO  
FONDIARISAI

Year 10 - n° 1 April 2010 - Quarterly edition

authorised by the Montepulciano Tribunal number 288 of 30/03/2001

**Editor in Chief:** Jean Paul Sia • **Consultant Editor:** Guido Sodano

**Editorial Secretary:** Marco Castignani, Fulvio Fonte, Francesca Coggiola

**Art direction:** Elisa Grotti • **Published by:** Trecentosessantagradi, Arezzo

**English Translation:** Michael Garner

**Address:** Via Grazianella, 5 - 53045 Acquaviva di Montepulciano (SI) - Italy  
tel. +39 0578767722 / fax +39 0578768040 / e-mail: info@saiagricola.it