



WINE NEWS FROM THE WORLD

By Ian D'Agata

- It appears 2009 Bordeaux is being built up as yet another vintage of the century, though some people are fearing a repeat of the overhyped, much too hot 2003. Still, experts of the caliber of Olivier Bernard, Philippe Dahuin, and JC Berrouet all have gone on record as saying it's a fantastic vintage. At the very least, far better than the 2008s. We'll know more at the upcoming Primeurs in march-april.
- High quality but little known Lazio producer Casale della Ioria first bottling ever of the native grape variety olivella is encountering strong market success. The wine is, appropriately enough, called L'Olivella and the first vintage released is the 1997. Another feather in the cap of Italy's many little known and high quality native varieties that, in the hands of honest winemakers who make authentic, non cabernet-syrah-merlot added versions of them, show they do have quite a lot to say.
- Huge Burgundy house Boisset has announced the acquisition of another Burgundy négociant, the well known firm of Antonin Rodet. Rodet was founded in 1875 and owns about 222 acres under vine, mainly around the hamlets of Rully and Mercurey, with a small portion also in Santenay and Hautes Cotes de Beaune.
- The Italian Society of Sports Medicine and of Exercise (SIMSE) will allow bottles of extra virgin olive oil produced by estate members of the Consortium of Chianti Classico to carry its logo and a written note attesting to the medical qualities of the oil. During the years of 2008 and 2009, the Consortium worked with the university of Florence and the sports medicine institution in an effort to determine the health benefits derived from a regular, daily consumption of extra virgin oil.
- A number of Bordeaux and Burgundy estates (for example, Chateau Pavie of Bordeaux), have invested in machinery that uses laser technology to help sort through the harvested grapes. These laser optic camera equipped sorting machines are expensive (roughly €100,000) and the jury's still out on just how effective they are, but so far people who have used them report being impressed.
- Seems things aren't getting any better for Robert Parker's former translator, Hanna Agostini, who appears to have been found guilty of a fraud involving false invoicing. She received a one year suspended sentence.
- At a moment when wine critics have been on in the eye of the storm, with much publicized episodes bringing into question credibility and professionalism of many (the Jay Miller

fiasco, the case of the non-existent restaurant in Italy getting rated by the Wine Spectator in its Restaurant issue), another unfortunate misdeed has been reported by Decanter magazine. It appears Matt Skinner has admitted he has not actually tasted a number of the wines he recommends in his latest book, The Juice 2010. Skinner, group wine manager for Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant in Melbourne, has gone on record as saying that in some cases, releases are so consistent year after year that he includes non-specific tasting notes. Your idea of a trustworthy wine guide ?

- Disappointing news for claret lovers, but one that was not unexpected for the writing was on the wall: Chateau Labégorce Zédé will be fused into the sister property, Chateau Labégorce, and will no longer exist as such. As the properties now have the same owners, the rearrangement will lead to one 55 Hectare estate called Chateau Labégorce and a second wine, called Zédé de Labégorce.