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**VINITALY & WINE: WINE TO ASIA:**

**DEBUT WITH THE LARGEST ITALIAN PAVILION EVER SET UP IN CHINA**

**The Greater Bay Area Wine Week also starts today until 17 May, the first off-show wine event scheduled in 7 different cities**

**Shenzhen, 11 May 2023** - *Wine to Asia*, the Veronafiere wine & spirits event, opens today until May 13, thereby inaugurating the 2023 calendar of international trade fairs in Shenzhen, China. A strategic destination in the Greater Bay Area (the driving force in China's economy with more than 100 million inhabitants), the Shenzhen Convention & Exhibition Center in Futian is home for the occasion to in excess of 450 exhibitors from 27 countries, with 1,500 brands and 15,000 operators expected from all over China, the result of a national incoming campaign that lasted more than two years and kept alive by roadshows and dedicated events even under the restrictions of the Zero Covid Policy.

The event welcomes 11 official national pavilions showcasing the main players in the world wine offering for the Chinese market, organized by ITA/ICE Agency, Spectacular South Africa, Wines of Portugal, Wines of Argentina, I Feel SLOVEnia, Spain Top Wines, Yantai, Rioja, Sud de France, as well as the Consulates General of Argentina and Uruguay in Guangzhou and the commercial section of the Consulate General of Belgium. In particular, Italy is represented in Shenzhen by more than 100 companies in the largest flag pavilion (71 wine brands) ever set up in China. For the first time, exhibitors are arranged by production regions and promoted through a special campaign (online and offline) developed jointly by ICE and Veronafiere. Another promotion programme started with the incoming campaign for the recent Vinitaly show itself in Verona and resumed immediately after in China with the official launch of the Italian Pavilion, the guest country at the government trade fair in Hainan (last 14 April).

“Veronafiere has been active in China for some time with its own office in Shanghai and Veronafiere Asia Ltd. The aim is to promote events and exhibitions in the sectors where it has operated for more than 120 years, as well as to monitor markets and current trends in various sectors," said the President of Veronafiere, Federico Bricolo. "Wine to Asia makes its full format début this year. It aims to encourage and support this recovery, as well as stimulating the development of the relationships and conditions needed to identify the new ways into a market that is unanimously still the most interesting among emerging countries in terms of global wine demand. We are convinced that the Chinese market can turn its trend around after two years of sharp decline in demand and this is why we are focusing our attention not only on current developments in the world of wine but also," Bricolo summed up, "on cocktails, low-alcohol beverages and out of home - all trends well represented by the event."

Wine to Asia also boasts a programme with more than 30 master classes and premium tastings of wine and spirits curated by some of the most authoritative voices on the global and Chinese wine scene. Figures include Ian D'Agata, an internationally renowned critic and curator of MicroMega Wines, who will open the first full-scale edition of Wine to Asia with 11 ambassador wines of the 11 national pavilions, to Vincent Xu, the wine from educator Chongqing who became famous for writing a major article about the Chinese spirit Baijiu on the WSET English-language website. While one of the most famous producers in China, Judy Chan, will spotlight Chinese wine in her keynote speech, Yang LV, the only Chinese Master Sommelier, on the other hand will present the wines of two important chateaux in Bordeaux. Considerable attention is also paid to sustainability, the subject of a webinar and a master class organized respectively by the Italian Chamber of Commerce in China and Federvini. "YGC Chinese Winemakers" is the area set aside for nine of the best emerging Chinese winemakers, while natural wine will be in the forefront through 30 exhibitors taking part in "Living Wine". Attention will also be focused on World Marselan Day, promoted by social media Grape Wall of China - the annual event dedicated to the French red grape variety making its début at a trade fair in Asia. Finally, special areas include one dedicated to Kombucha and "alcohol-free and low alcohol" beverages and another focusing on coffee and cocktails with the Coffee Cocktail Experience Lounge jointly created by De' Longhi and one of the finest bars in Asia, Hope and Sesame.

There are also plenty of initiatives specifically for wine lovers: from today until 17 May, they can venture into special fine dining initiatives and promotions organised in more than 40 wine bars and bistros by Veronafiere's joint venture company in China as part of the *Greater Bay Area Wine Week*, the first and only initiative that puts the ho.re.ca world online in the cities of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Dongguan, Zhuhai, Foshan and Huizhou.

**List of exhibitors in the Italian Pavilion at Wine to Asia**

http://www.wine2asia.net/EN/index.php/exhibitor-list/

**List of Italian participants outside the pavilion**

http://www.wine2asia.net/EN/index.php/exhibitor-list/ - Italy section.

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