*International Wine and Spirit Exhibition at Veronafiere 2-5 April 2023*

**55th VINITALY UNDERWAY: INSTITUTIONS CROWN VERONA CAPITAL OF THE ITALIAN WINE SYSTEM**

**The inaugural day was attended by Lorenzo Fontana, Speaker of the Chamber, and representatives of five ministries: Lollobrigida (Agriculture), Sangiuliano (Culture), Tajani (Foreign Affairs), Salvini (Infrastructure) and Schillaci (Health). Vinitaly: guiding role as the preferential venue for everyone involved in promoting Italian wine on international markets.**

[**www.vinitaly.com**](http://www.vinitaly.com)

**Verona, 2 April 2023** – Vinitialy: the international promotion platform for a sector leading Italy's balance of trade figures, with a supply chain involving 530,000 companies, 870,000 employees and turnover of 31.3 billion euros: Vinitaly returns to Veronafiere today and restates its guiding role for the Italian wine sector.

An all-business show with more than 4,000 exhibitors from over 30 countries in the forefront for four days in 17 halls and a net show area of 100,000 square metres. Veronafiere is consequently the top meeting place for the finest wines on offer to meet demand by professional operators from all over the world: more than 25,000 are those expected from 130 countries.

Vinitaly confirms its status as a strategic tool at the service of Made in Italy, turning Verona into the capital of the national wine system. And this role was truly highlighted today by the institutions attending the show: Lorenzo Fontana, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Francesco Lollobrigida, Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, Gennaro Sangiuliano, Minister of Culture, Antonio Tajani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Matteo Salvini, Deputy Premier and Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, and Orazio Schillaci, Minister of Health.

"*I wish to thank Veronafiere for its helpfulness and improving the involvement of our Government in this exhibition system,*" said **Minister Lollobrigida**. *"Verona is a centre of excellence and the Veneto Region itself is performing better than many others. Yet we must try to align System-Italy in its entirety because there is nothing stronger than Italy as a brand*." "*Excellence*" was also mentioned by the **Speaker of the Chamber, Fontana**, in defining Vinitaly as "*a magnificent event whereby Verona demonstrates all its potential*".

A fully-fledged investiture by the institutions that acknowledges Vinitaly as the venue bringing together all the subjects involved in the promoting Italian wine on emerging and mature international markets.

"*We have seen a strong and positive signal of unity of purpose between Veronafiere-Vinitaly and the entire institutional system involved in the internationalisation of Made in Italy,*" said **Federico Bricolo**, President of Veronafiere, during the inauguration. “*Such an impressive and qualified attendance by the Government is a sign of high consideration, for which we are grateful - not the least on behalf of all our exhibitors. The goal now is to build together a permanent and coordinated promotional platform capable, on the one hand, of attracting investments in Italian products and, on the one, incoming visitors to Italy, its vocational territories and the exhibition that best represents it: Vinitaly*."

"*Facts and figures for the supply chain clearly show how - in more or less a single decade - wine has firmly become a strategic asset among Italian products,*" said **Maurizio Danese**, Managing Director of Veronafiere. “*This is why we must now seek to intensify and accelerate a project to make Vinitaly an even more effective brand on the international scene for our wine, with the aim of increasing attendance by professional operators from abroad and our own permanent involvement on global markets. The next frontier for expanding the Veronafiere Group, after Brazil and China, are the United States in the West, Japan and South Korea in the Far East*."

Luca Zaia, Governor of the Veneto Region, Damiano Tommasi, Mayor of Verona, Flavio Massimo Pasini, President of the Province of Verona, Pasquale Salzano, President of Simest, and Matteo Zoppas, President of ICE Trade Agency.

In the meantime, the 55th Vinitaly has already posted a record: more than 1,000 top buyers from 68 countries arrived in Verona today: super-buyers selected, invited and hosted in collaboration with ICE Trade Agency (up by 43% compared to last year). And the 10,000 b2b appointments already scheduled even before the start of the exhibition is another record.

Vinitaly is held alongside the 27th Sol&Agrifood, the exhibition of quality agri-food, and the 24th Enolitech, the international exhibition of technologies for wine, olive oil and beer production.

At the end of the inauguration ceremony, Veronafiere and Vinitaly paid homage to **Angelo Betti**, agronomist, journalist and historic Secretary General of the Verona Fair Authority in the 1970-80s and devised many exhibitions that have since become established international brands, including Vinitaly. In 2016, the ***Cangrande Award for Merit in Wine-Growing*** was renamed after Betti and this morning his grand-daughter, Maria Neve Betti, received a medal in memory of the 50th anniversary of this Award**.**

This was in turn followed by the **Vinitaly International Award prize-giving ceremony,** In the **International** category, the award was made to **Joseph Schuller**, Master of Wine and managing director of the Austrian Wine Academy, "for his merit as founder of the most important WSET Centre in Europe which, for 35 years, has trained 15,000 students every year and whose Campus has seen more than 100 students become Masters of Wine."

For **Italy**, on the other hand, the award went to **Riccardo Cotarella**, oenologist and Professor of Oenology at the University of Tuscia in Viterbo, "for his constant commitment to supporting companies in the sector, through his personal wine-making experience, to promote Italian wine and his contribution towards expanding awareness oof lesser-known territories of Italy".

The new **Innovation** category, lastly, saw the award go to **Marco Simonit**, master pruner, "for his research in the field of wine-growing whereby he is able to offer consultancy for the most important vineyards around the world and for having introduced and spread a branched pruning technique that is less invasive and more respectful of the nature of vines".

PRESS INFO

**Exhibition Centre entrances:** Cangrande (Viale del Lavoro) and Re Teodorico (Viale dell'Industria)

**Access times:** 09:30 - 18:00 (until 16.30 only on 5 April).

**Press accreditation** you must compile the online application form <https://www.veronafiere.it/area-stampa/accredito-stampa/accredito-stampa-vinitaly-2023/>.

Accreditation, if applicable (see online), can also be performed at two points in the Exhibition Centre: Palaexpo Press Accreditation Centre (Viale del Lavoro) or Press Accreditation Desk c/o the ticket office at the Re Teodorico entrance (Viale dell'Industria).

For any questions relating to press accreditations for Vinitaly 2023, the specific number to call is exclusively 045.96.91.220.

**Press Room:** Delle Erbe Service Centre, first floor, gallery between Halls 4/5; WI-FI network: "Press Room", password "PressServices"

**Parking areas:** on showing Journalist ID and the Vinitaly press pass, there is free parking subject to availability in the Palaexpo forecourt and visitor car parks. All information about traffic conditions is online on the event website at <https://www.vinitaly.com/verona/viabilita-e-parcheggi/>, while the locations of car parks are available on Google Maps: <https://www.vinitaly.com/map/>.

**Exhibition Centre Map** <https://vinitaly.g2k.it/media/qc3oc1a1/mappa-vinitaly-2023-169.jpg>.

**Vinitaly 2023 Press Kit** <https://www.vinitaly.com/press/cartella-stampa/>.

**Vinitaly 2023 events and tasting programme:** <https://liveshop.vinitaly.com/eventi/?date=2023-04-02T00:00:00&fair=6004>.

**Photographic material:** send requests to vinitalypress@veronafiere.it.

**Video material:** clips, interviews and cover pictures at <https://media.filmand.it/s/vinitaly2023> (pw: stampa); services at <https://www.veronafierechannel.it/>.

**Veronafiere Press Service**

Tel.: + 39.045.829.83.50 - 82.42 - 82.10 – 84.27

E-mail: pressoffice@veronafiere.it;

Twitter: @pressVRfiere | Facebook: @veronafiere

Web: [www.veronafiere.it](http://www.veronafiere.it)

**Ispropress**

Benny Lonardi (393.455.5590; direzione@ispropress.it)

Simone Velasco (327.9131676; simovela@ispropress.it)