vinetur

OperaWine 2024 Celebrates Italian Excellence

Verona's OperaWine Celebrates 131 Top Italian Wineries

Wednesday, May 15, 2024



This year's 13th edition of OperaWine truly kicked off the wine season with a sparkle, unfolding in the heart of Verona on April 13th. This premier event not only sets the stage for the much-anticipated Vinitaly, the largest wine trade fair in Italy, but also cements itself as a pivotal celebration of the finest Italian wines. Housed in the spacious Gallerie Mercatali, OperaWine gathered 131 top Italian wineries, making it a vibrant prologue to the main event.

OperaWine, born from a collaboration between Wine Spectator, Vinitaly, and Veronafiere, has evolved into a fundamental institution in the wine world. Filippo Mazzei, Managing Director and co-owner of Mazzei wines, captured the essence of the event, saying, "OperaWine is how we start Vinitaly." His enthusiasm resonates with many as the event offers a unique platform to showcase Italian wine at its best.

The Grand Tasting Event

The tasting event welcomed around 1,900 guests by invitation, including a stellar lineup of international journalists, sommeliers, wine experts, and educators. Bruce Sanderson, Senior Editor at Wine Spectator, noted, "One of our favorite ways to highlight Italian wine each year is at OperaWine, with the tasting of 'The Best Italian Wines'." Since its inaugural edition in 2012, OperaWine has significantly expanded from showcasing 100 to now 130 producers, reflecting the rich diversity and quality of Italian wine.

A Spotlight on Italian Wine Diversity

The wines on display were a testament to the rich tapestry of Italian viticulture, featuring outstanding examples from Brunello to Barolo, Soave to Fiano. The event also highlighted unique blends and varietals, such as a Sicilian mix of Nero d'Avola and Perricone and a Sagrantino from Umbria. A particularly intriguing offering was the Tintilia en Anfora from Cantine Catabbo, fermented in clay vessels. Sara Catabbo of Cantine Catabbo shared, "Our Tintilia en Anfora has drawn the attention of many importers and wine lovers."

This year, OperaWine placed additional emphasis on Sicily, underlining the ongoing importance of these wines in the U.S. market and the synergy among producers striving for higher quality. Sixteen Sicilian wineries took part in the 2024 tasting, including 11 who had participated in previous years.

Vinitaly: A Growing Phenomenon

Following the buzz of OperaWine, Vinitaly unfolded over the next four days, attracting around 4,600 exhibitors and over 130,000 visitors globally. For many, OperaWine was a highlight, setting a high bar for the days to follow. Isidoro Vajra, winemaker and co-owner of G.D. Vajra in Piedmont, echoed the sentiment of many attendees, stating, "When I got home after OperaWine, I told my family, 'If VinItaly is like OperaWine, we will be very happy.'"

OperaWine not only showcases the superb quality and variety of wines but also plays a crucial role in bringing together the wine community in a setting of appreciation and acknowledgment. As it continues to grow, OperaWine solidifies its status as an essential showcase, offering a lens through which to view the trends and excellence defining the future of wine in Italy. This event remains a pivotal diary date for anyone keen to understand and experience the pinnacle of Italian winemaking.