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Vini d’Abbazia draws thousands to Fossanova Abbey for celebration of monastic winemaking and cultural heritage

Historic abbey hosts tastings, masterclasses, and debates highlighting tradition, innovation, and regional development in Lazio’s wine sector

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From June 6 to June 8, the Abbey of Fossanova in Priverno, Lazio, became the center of attention for wine enthusiasts and cultural travelers as it hosted the fourth edition of Vini d'Abbazia. The event welcomed more than 4,000 visitors from Italy and abroad, all drawn by the unique opportunity to explore the deep-rooted tradition of monastic winemaking. The Abbey, a landmark of Cistercian Gothic architecture dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries, provided a historic backdrop for three days of tastings, discussions, and cultural exchange.

Over 30 wineries with connections to abbeys participated in this year's event. These included some of Italy's most respected abbey wineries, secular producers with historical ties to monastic sites, the French network Les Vins d'Abbayes, and the Monastery of Alaverdi – Badagoni from Georgia, which is recognized as a symbol of Orthodox Christian winemaking. Attendees had the chance to sample rare and historic wines that have been preserved by monastic communities for centuries. Tastings took place in the Abbey's cloister, while a Food & Wine Village offered regional culinary specialties and live music.

The event was not limited to wine tasting. It also featured masterclasses held in the Abbey's Refectory, where experts from the wine and cultural sectors led sessions on the relationship between tradition and modernity in winemaking. These classes attracted a diverse audience eager to understand wine as both a product and a cultural artifact. Conferences and debates brought together local authorities, agricultural leaders, and figures from the food and wine industries to discuss how tradition can drive innovation and regional development.

Giovanni Acampora, President of the Chamber of Commerce Frosinone-Latina, emphasized that Vini d'Abbazia demonstrates how tradition can meet innovation to create value for the region. He highlighted that the event's inclusion in "Le Vie del Giubileo," a regional initiative promoted by Regione Lazio and ARSIAL (the Regional Agency for the Development and Innovation of Lazio Agriculture), is part of a broader effort to strengthen connections between tourism, agriculture, and entrepreneurship ahead of the 2025 Jubilee.

Massimiliano Raffa, President of ARSIAL, noted that events like Vini d’Abbazia show how wine serves as more than just a product—it is a narrative tool that unites communities and supports regeneration. He pointed out that Lazio’s wine heritage spans thousands of years and is now increasingly focused on quality, sustainability, and local grape varieties. The regional government and ARSIAL are committed to supporting producers through strategic promotion and development initiatives.

The organization behind Vini d’Abbazia includes several local associations and cooperatives such as Strada del Vino, dell’Olio e dei Sapori della provincia di Latina; Taste Roots; UpWell Development Consulting; and Associazione Polygonal. The event is supported by BCC Roma, Giovani Soci BCC Roma, Polsinelli, Confagricoltura, Azienda Speciale Informare, Oltre Roma Wine Tour, Direzione Regionale Musei Lazio, Slow Food Lazio, Associazione Nazionale Le Donne del Vino, as well as technical partners like Vivaio Aumenta and Acqua Filette. Media partners include Rai Radio 2 and Vinum.

Fossanova itself is located just a few kilometers from Parco Nazionale del Circeo and Sabaudia’s beaches. The area is known for its biodiversity and ancient villages. For three days during Vini d’Abbazia, the Abbey became a meeting point for stories about wine’s role in shaping identity and promoting cultural tourism in Lazio.

The Abbey of Fossanova has long been an important spiritual center. Built on the remains of an earlier Benedictine monastery and entrusted to Cistercian monks in 1135, it later became famous as the place where Saint Thomas Aquinas spent his final days in 1274. Today its medieval cloister hosts tastings while restored spaces like the Refectory serve as venues for masterclasses.

Vini d’Abbazia continues to grow as an event that brings together history, culture, spirituality, and gastronomy. It offers visitors not only a taste of rare wines but also an experience rooted in centuries-old traditions that continue to shape both local identity and international appreciation for monastic winemaking.