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Italian Abbeys Highlighted in Franciacorta Conference on Wine Culture and Regional Identity

Experts and community leaders gather to discuss monastic influence on viticulture, heritage preservation, and local traditions in historic setting

Friday, September 19, 2025



On October 4, 2025, the Convent of the Santissima Annunciata in Franciacorta, Italy, will host a conference focused on the relationship between wine culture and the identity of territories, with a special emphasis on the historical and ongoing role of abbeys. The event, organized by Vini d’Abbazia and hosted by the Vittorio and Mariella Moretti Foundation, is set to begin at 11:30 a.m. and will bring together experts from monastic communities, academia, and the wine industry.

The conference aims to explore how abbeys have shaped landscapes, preserved agricultural knowledge, and maintained spiritual traditions tied to winemaking. Franciacorta, known for its sparkling wines, has a long history of monastic involvement in viticulture. The region’s reputation for quality wine owes much to these early religious communities who cultivated vineyards and passed down their expertise.

Speakers at the event will include Vittorio Moretti, president of the hosting foundation; Renzo Cotarella, CEO of Marchesi Antinori and head of production at Badia a Passignano; Attilio Scienza, professor of viticulture at the University of Milan; Don Andrea Santus from the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore; Father Stefano Visintin from the Abbey of Praglia; Werner Waldboth from the Abbey of Novacella; Manfred Bernard from the Benedictine Abbey of Muri-Gries; Father Luigi Cavagna from the Franciscan Convent of Rodengo Saiano; and Brother Michele Badino from the Monastery of Bose. Institutional representatives such as Italy’s Minister of Agriculture, regional officials, local mayors, and delegates from agricultural organizations are also expected to attend. Rocco Tolfa, a journalist with RAI, will moderate the discussion.

After the conference, attendees will have an opportunity to taste wines produced by several abbeys represented at the event. This tasting is organized by AIS Lombardia and offers guests a chance to experience firsthand the traditions discussed during the conference.

The choice of venue carries symbolic weight. The Convent of the Santissima Annunciata is a site with deep historical and spiritual roots. Since 2018, it has been managed by the Vittorio and Mariella Moretti Foundation following its transfer from the Order of the Servants of Mary. The foundation has worked to restore the convent as a center for culture and hospitality in Franciacorta.

Carlo Petrini, who was present at the official handover ceremony in 2018, described the convent as a place where community values can thrive—a space dedicated to both beauty and public good.

Admission to the conference is free but requires advance reservation due to limited capacity. Details about registration and the full program are available on vinidabbazia.com.

The conference is part of a broader open day at the convent called “Come in famiglia,” running from 8:00 a.m. until midnight on October 4. Activities planned for visitors include nature walks, workshops, readings, and meetings designed to foster community engagement with this historic site.

The event has received support from Italia Patria della Bellezza Foundation, which promotes initiatives that highlight Italy’s cultural heritage. Further information about related events can be found on fvmm.it.