**Press Release Contacts:**

**For Immediate Release** Vinitaly International

International Media Dept.

+39 045 8101447

[media@vinitalytour.com](mailto:media@vinitalytour.com)

[www.vinitalytour.com](http://www.vinitalytour.com)

Twitter: @VinitalyTour

Join Vinitaly International Network on LinkedIn

**OperaWine unveils the list of 103 wines in the presence of newly nominated VIA Italian Wine Ambassadors and Italian Wine Experts**

As 55 candidates from 16 different countries are concentrated right now on the final exam of the first edition of the VIA Certification Course in Villa Quaranta (Verona), OperaWine, Vinitaly’s exclusive premier showcase, has finally announced the complete list of 103 Italian wines that will be presented at this year’s edition on the 21st of March in the exclusive setting of Palazzo della Gran Guardia: 15 white wines (of which one sweet), 6 sparkling and a grand 82 red wines from all different wine regions of Italy.

The list also includes a record 20 new entries and has been announced at the same time as the official launch of the wine guide published by the Italian daily paper Corriere della Sera in collaboration with Wine Spectator.

“Italy's wines present extraordinary breadth, depth and diversity, and Vinitaly is its gathering place” explains Thomas Matthews, Executive Editor of Wine Spectator, the prestigious magazine that each year selects the 100 Finest Italian wine producers. “With OperaWine, Wine Spectator and Vinitaly hope to showcase the essence of this achievement, by spotlighting benchmark wines and leading wineries. In 2015, the fourth edition of OperaWine, we announce two noteworthy innovations. First, this year's line-up includes a record 20 new producers, testifying to the strength of Italian wine producers, and their continued progress. Second, Wine Spectator has partnered with Corriere della Sera to produce a book documenting OperaWine, so that wine lovers throughout Italy and around the world can appreciate the remarkable achievements of Italy's great wines”.

This year’s edition will further emphasize the event’s strong connection to the world of the Opera Music, one of the main symbols of Verona since 1913 when the Arena of Verona staged the very first edition of the Aida of Giuseppe Verdi in celebration of the famous artist’s birth anniversary. The reproduction of this same grand opera, now at its 56th edition, will offer the perfect setting for Italy’s Top Italian wine producers who will be personally serving their wines to a selected crowd of national and international journalists, trade and wine experts.



Members of four international delegations from Hong Kong, China, Europe and the US will also be the spectators of this grand fourth act thus further highlighting OperaWine’s international breadth.

The day will open at 1pm with the traditional press conference that this year will represent a moment of great solemnity with two official announcements: Ian D’Agata and Stevie Kim will reveal the names of the candidates who today will pass the final exam of the VIA Certification Course and become the first Italian Wine Ambassadors and Italian Wine Experts of the Vinitaly International Academy.

The second announcement will be the winner of the second edition of the #bestoperawine contest, addressed by Vinitaly International to all Twitter users who wish to vote for their favourite winery amongst the 100 top producers of this year’s edition (<http://www.operawine.it/images/pdf/List_hashtag.pdf>).

The contest is still open until this evening so tweet on !

The 3.45 pm Opening Ceremony to be held in the presence of the Minister of Agricolture, Maurizio Martina, will officially open the afternoon Grand Tasting from 4 pm to 6.30 pm.

Partner of OperaWine this year is the famous Italian brand Diadora that will also be Vinitaly International’s official partner in its tour around the world.

Opera Wine also wishes to thank sponsors Air Dolomiti and Surgiva and technical partner, Bormioli, for their invaluable support during the event. A special thanks also goes to SocialMeter for the technical support offered by monitoring all social traffic before and during the event.

For more information, visit http://www.operawine.it/home

To see the list of 100 Finest Italian Wine Producers go to: http://www.operawine.it/who-they-are

**About:**

**Wine Spectator** is the world’s leading authority on wine that reaches more than 3 million readers worldwide, exploring wine’s role in contemporary culture and delivering expert reviews of more than 15,000 wines each year. Wine Spectator is solely responsible for the choice of producers at the event.

**Veronafiere** is the leading organizer of trade shows in Italy including Vinitaly (www.vinitaly.com), the largest wine and spirits fair in the world. During its 48th edition Vinitaly counted some 155.000 visitors and 4.000 exhibitors on a 100.000 square meter area. The next edition of the fair will take place on 22 – 25 March 2015. The premier event to Vinitaly, OperaWine (www.vinitalyinternational.com) “Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers,” will unite international wine professionals on March 21st 2015 in the heart of Verona, offering them the unique opportunity to discover and taste the 100 best Italian wines, as selected by Wine Spectator. Since 1998 Vinitaly International travels to several countries such as Russia, China, USA and Hong Kong. In February 2014 Vinitaly International launched an educational project, the Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) with the aim of divulging and broadcasting the excellence and diversity of Italian wine around the globe. VIA is now ready to present the first edition of its VIA Certification Course to be held in Verona from the 16th to the 20th of March 2015 with the aim of creating new Ambassadors of Italian Wine in the World.

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