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**Robert Yang from 1919 the Chinese giant of O2O in liquor and spirits, joins the Italian Wine journey along the Silk Road at OperaWine 2017**

At its sixth edition, “OperaWine, Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers” raised its glasses with a special appearance of Robert Yang, CEO of 1919 the Chinese O2O liquor distribution on Saturday 8th of April in the beautiful Palazzo della Gran Guardia in Verona. This year’s theme, the Silk Road paid homage to economic and cultural ties between Italy and China, as the invited members of trade and press spent time getting to know the wines of the 100 best Italian producers, as chosen by Wine Spectator Magazine.

Silk Road from Italy to China. Managing Director of Vinitaly International Stevie Kim opened the press conference, underlining the fact that OperaWine not only represents the greatest producers and their wines of Italy, but embraces their important International markets; their current largest market USA and especially their future market China. “French wines are not better than Italian wines, but certainly holds the most important market share in China amongst imported wine category. In order to communicate Italian Wines better, we must accelerate in creating more Italian Wine Ambassadors both in the US and China”, explained Kim.

After welcoming remarks by Maurizio Danese, President of Veronafiere, Robert Yang, CEO of 1919, the Chinese O2O liquor distribution introduced himself and his company for the first time to all the producers. “The presence of Italian Wine in the Chinese market is still very small. However, we guarantee you that we will increase the sales for Italian wine in China to more than 2 million bottles by 2020”, confirmed Yang.

This year, 14 producers were first-time participants: Elena Fucci and San Marino from Basilicata, Salvatore Molettieri from Campagnia, La Stoppa and Tenuta Pederzana from Emilia-Romagna, Vie di Romans from Friuli/Venezia-Giulia, Garofoli from Marche, Antoniolo and Produttori del Barbaresco from Piemonte, Cantina Sociale di Santadi from Sardinia, Morgante from Sicilia, Grosjean from Valle d’Aosta, and Gino and Zymè from Veneto.

Alison Napjus, Senior Editor and Tasting Director of Wine Spectator commented, “Our goals are twofold in assembling the winners for OperaWine. First, to testify the extraordinary quality of Italian wines. Second, to showcase the exciting breadth of its wine regions, grapes and style. Our principle criteria are wine quality; regional leadership; and historical significance. Because of the country’s diversity, heritage and achievements in wine cannot be summed up in such a small group of producers, and our list changes each year.”

Napjus continued, “Italian wine producers are talented, dedicated, and passionate. They respect tradition, show concern for the environment, adopt new technology where it’s beneficial and never cease their efforts to improve their wine. We are very excited to be a witness to this ongoing evolution, and proud to showcase part of it, arguably the very best part of it, here at OperaWine tonight.”

About:

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 51th edition Vinitaly counted more than 4,270 exhibitors on a 100,000+ square meter area and 128,000 visitors from 142 different countries with more than 30,000 top international buyers (up by 8%). The next edition of the fair will take place on 15 - 18 April 2018. The premier event to Vinitaly, OperaWine (www.operawine.it) “Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers,” will unite international wine professionals on April 14th in the heart of Verona, offering them the unique opportunity to discover and taste the wines of the 100 Best Italian Producers, as selected by Wine Spectator. Since 1998 Vinitaly International travels to several countries such as Russia, China, USA and Hong Kong thanks to its strategic arm abroad, Vinitaly International. 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 this year launched the third edition of its Certification Course and today counts 79 Italian Wine Ambassadors and 7 Italian Wine Experts.