

Press Release
For Immediate Release

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A New Generation of Italian Wine Educators is Born

The Vinality International Academy (VIA) adds another layer to its Ecosystem taking it one step closer to its goal of dominating the world of Italian wine education. VIA is already considered the gold standard in Italian wine education, providing career growth opportunities to wine professionals who have chosen to participate in one of the most challenging programs in the industry. Now those that have qualified as Italian Wine Ambassadors can disseminate their knowledge by becoming certified as Italian Wine Educators for the newest level of VIA's Italian Wine Maestro Course.



Photograph: Vinality International Academy class photograph during the Italian Wine Ambassador certification course in Verona, Italy, in April 2019.

The Italian Wine Maestro Course has been designed by Vinality International Academy to augment the existing prospectus, and appeal to those in the wine world wanting to understand more about Italian wine fundamentals. It is considered a building block for individuals who might one day consider tackling the Italian Wine Ambassador Certification Course. The launch of the 2017 pilot programme under the guidance of Michaela Morris in Vancouver Canada resulted in overwhelming interest. Consequently, Vinality International Academy has developed the Educator course, an online education platform specifically designed to enable

VIA Italian wine Ambassadors to become qualified to teach the Maestro course in their home territories. The addition of the Educator Course and subsequently the Maestro Course, will continue to enrich the Vinitaly International Academy ecosystem.

One of the overarching goals of VIA since its inception has been to build a sustainable ecosystem made up of passionate Italian wine specialists designed to promote the global appreciation of Italian wine. The pillars of the VIA Ecosystem include a scientific focus on native grapes; an Advisory Committee comprised of the institutional bodies: Federvini, FIVI, Federdoc and Unione Italiana Vini; the Supporters who sponsor and contribute to all events and tasting labs during the Italian Wine Ambassador Certification Courses; a highly qualified faculty and, the wine professionals who attend the VIA Programs.

The VIA community already enjoy unique opportunities for professional advancement; individuals from all over the world that become part of the VIA group receive international recognition for their expertise on Italian wine such as priority access to events and educational seminars. In addition, they are priority candidates for the incoming programs sponsored by the Italian Trade Commission (ICE), designed to introduce international importers and educators to Italian wineries and regions. The Italian Wine Educator project will add a new layer to this already rich program. Once certified, Italian Wine Ambassadors who hold the educator status may begin running the Maestro Italian Wine Course within their own markets. This will dramatically increase the profile of Italian wine and Italian wine education globally, particularly in key markets such as China, Russia, Japan, Canada and the United States.

The unique approach of the VIA Italian Wine Educator program is that it directly certifies the educator rather than a school or provider. This aspect fundamentally sets it apart from other certifications and allows complete flexibility as to how and where the educator chooses to set up their courses. Building on this flexibility, VIA has deliberately created the course as an online platform allowing global access for its community of Ambassadors. The course includes an online Webinar, led by VIA Italian Wine Expert Gill Gordon-Smith, Winner of the WCA's Best Wine Educator and Wine Communicator of the Year award in 2017. She was enthusiastic in her praise of this new chapter in VIA's evolution: *"The VIA educator program is an amazing opportunity for Ambassadors to deliver Italian wine education in their markets to the highest standards, fully supported by outstanding teaching resources and mentors-which makes this program stand-out."*

The introduction of the Italian Wine Educator Course and by extension the Italian Wine Maestro Certification Course lay the groundwork for the broader future of the Vinitaly International Academy which plans to introduce the Italian Wine Fellow Course in the near future. Additional information can be requested at educator@vinitalytour.com.

About: The grand Vinitaly 2020 will be held from April 19 to 22. Every year, Vinitaly counts more than 4,000 exhibitors on a 100,000+ square meter area and 130,000 visitors from over 140 different countries with more than 30,000 top international buyers. The premier event to Vinitaly, OperaWine "Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers," which will be held on April 18, one day prior to Vinitaly, will unite international wine professionals 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 fourteenth edition of its Certification Course and today counts 190 Italian Wine Ambassadors and 14 Italian Wine Experts.