**Press Release Contacts:**

**For Immediate Release** Vinitaly International

International Media Dept.

+39 045 8101447

media@vinitalytour.com

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

Twitter: @VinitalyTour

Join Vinitaly International Network on LinkedIn

**Judges announced for the new Vinitaly 5 Star Wines Award**

Vinitaly International has announced the team of expert judges from 17 different countries who will be taking part in the new Vinitaly 5 Star Award to be held from the 1st to the 3rd of April 2016 (www.vinitaly.com/en/exhibitor-area/vinitaly-international-competitions/5-Star-Wines/judges/). This new competition represents the evolution of Vinitaly’s International Wine Awards, founded 23 years ago and that has had a long and distinguished history of awarding medals to both Italian and international wines.

The new competition features:

* An entirely new scoring system (the 100 point scale that is used in most other world wine competitions)
* Only those wines that have scored 90 or more points will be selected for the 5 Star Wines award; gold, silver, and bronze medals will no longer be awarded
* The top scoring red, white, sparkling and sweet wine will receive a special award
* The two (Italian and International) wine estates that record the highest average score (computed by averaging out the scores of all their wines scoring 90 or more points) will also receive a special prize
* The judging panels will be composed of four to five judges of international renown, recognized experts on international wines but who are especially knowledgeable about Italian wines. For this reason, the 5 Star Wines competition is uniquely characterized by the presence of many graduates (Ambassadors and Experts) of the Vinitaly International Academy certification course in Italian wines.
* Other judges include some of Italy’ foremost winemakers, as well Masters of Wine, Master Sommelliers, Michelin starred restaurant sommeliers, and educators.

The competition will be headlined by a special selection of four 50th Anniversary General Chairmen, who will be retaste all those wines presenting a large range in scores and all those wines scored 90 points only. New judges and general chairmen will be invited to the competition each year, making for a dynamic set of invited judges that will not be the same year to year.



The entire competition is overseen by Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International and Ian D’Agata, Scientific Director of the Vinitaly International Academy, who will be on hand to address queries and help resolve differing viewpoints on any of the wines.

Registration and delivery of samples opens on 1 February and closes on 18 March 2016. More information is available on the Vinitaly website at <http://vinitaly.com/en/exhibitor-area/vinitaly-international-competitions/5-Star-Wines/>

**JUDGE LIST**

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|  | **Chief Content Officer** |  |
| Italy | Stevie | Kim | Managing Director, Vinitaly International |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **Chief Technical Officer:** |  |
| Italy  | Ian  | D'Agata  | Scientific Director, Vinitaly International Acadamy  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **50th Anniversary General Chairmen** |
| Switzerland | Paolo  | Basso  | Association Sommelerie Internationale, World’s Best Sommelier 2013  |
| France  | Bernard  | Burtschy  | Chief, Le Figaro Vin  |
| UK | Robert  | Joseph | Editor at Large, Meininger's Wine Business International  |
| Spain | Pedro  | Ballesteros Torres MW  | Master of Wine  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **Panel Chairmen** |  |
| UK | Stephen  | Brook  | Decanter Contributing Editor  |
| USA | Charles | Curtis MW  | Master of Wine  |
| Italy | Vincenzo | Donatiello  | Head Sommielier, Piazza Duomo - Three Michelin Star Restaurant  |
| Luxembourg | Abi | Duhr  | Leading Luxembourg wine writer, wine producer and journalist for VINO (Luxembourg wine magazine) |
| UK | Andy  | Howard MW  | Master of Wine (Ex Chief Buyer, Marks&Spencer) |
| USA | Kathy | Morgan MS  | Master Sommelier (Independent Wine Consultant)  |
| UK  | Monty  | Waldin  | Decanter (and Author of 13 books and Guides on Natural Wines) |
| China  | Yang  | Lu  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Corporate/Group Wine Director, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts |
| Canada  | Barabara  | Philip MW  | Master of Wine (Category Manager for European Wines, British Columbia Liquor Stores)  |
| UK  | Marcia  | Waters MW  | Master of Wine  |
| Italy  | Giuseppe  | Palmieri  | Head Sommelier, La Francescana - Three Michelin Star Restaurant and Owner, GLOCAL  |
| UK  | Sebastian  | Payne MW  | Master of Wine (and Chief Buyer, The Wine Society)  |
| Argentina  | Fabricio | Portelli  | Leading Argentinian Wine Writer |
| Canada  | Igor  | Ryjenkov MW  | Master of Wine (Category Manager, European Wine Portfolio, Liquor Control Board of Ontario) |
| Canada  | Bruce  | Wallner  | Master of Sommelier (and Owner, Sommelier Factory) |
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|  | **Senior Judges**  |  |  |
| Italy  | Franco  | Bernabei  | Winemaker  |
| Italy  | Alessandro | Bocchetti | Chief Coordinator, E'Abruzzo Wine Consortium and Owner, La Reserve Hotel & Spa  |
| Italy  | Maurizio  | Castelli  | Winemaker  |
| Italy  | Pierluigi | Cocchini | ARSIA Molise Executive (in charge of Molise, Slowine Guide)  |
| Italy  | Massimo Claudio  | Comparini | Chairman, EarthLab Precision Agriculture and Viticulture (Head of the Best Italian Wines Guide)  |
| Italy  | Riccardo | Cotarella | Winemaker |
| Italy  | Luca | d’Attoma | Winemaker |
| USA | Laura | De Pasquale MS  | Master Sommellier and Vice President and General Manager, Stacole Fine Wines  |
| Italy | Emiliano | Falsini  | Winemaker |
| UK  | Michael  | Garner | Author, Winewriter |
| UK | Robin  | Kick MW | Master of Wine (Independent Wine Consultant)  |
| Italy  | Lorenzo | Landi  | Winemaker |
| USA  | Shelley | Lindgren  | Owner and Wine Director, A16 and SPQR Restaurants |
| Italy  | Giorgio | Melandri  | General Manager, Enologica (In charge Emilia Romagna, GR wine guide)  |
| Italy  | Luca  | Panunzio | Owner, Locanda Manthoné and Bollicine e Dolcezze (Head Abruzzo, AIS wine Guide)  |
| Italy  | Attilio | Pagli  | Winemaker |
| USA | Giampaolo | Paterlini  | Owner, Acquerello - Specialising in Italian wines |
| Netherlands  | Janna  | Rijpmaa | Multiple Wine Book Author and Owner, Ennovision International Media Company  |
| Austria  | Luzia | Schrampf | VIA Wine Ambassador, Wine Columnist, Der Standard  |
| China | Fongyee | Walker  | Senior Wine Consultant, Dragon Phoenix Wine Consulting |
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|  | **Judges**  |  |  |
| Canada  | Gurvinder  | Bhatia  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Editor, Quench Magazine  |
| UK | Andrea | Briccarello  | Head sommelier, One Michelin Star Galvin’s Restaurant London  |
| USA  | Geralyn | Brostrom | VIA Wine Expert, Owner, Italian Wine Central  |
| France  | Johan | Castaing | Chief, Anthocyanes Magazine |
| USA | René  | Chazottes MS | Master Sommelier and Wine Director, Pacific Club  |
| Italy  | Diego | Dequigiovanni  | Head Sommelier, One Michelin Star Del Cambio Restaurant  |
| Italy  | Alessandra | Fedi | WSET Educator  |
| China  | Lingzi  | He  | VIA Wine Expert, Wine Writer and Assistant Director, winecult.com  |
| Italy  | Michele | Longo  | Director, Winecult.com (Co-curator Italian Best Wines Guide)  |
| Italy  | Tommaso | Mascolo | Head Sommelier, One Michelin Star Indaco Restaurant  |
| Canada | Michaela | Morris  | VIA Wine Expert, Wine Writer, British Columbia Wine Stores Staff  |
| UK | Emily | O’Hare | VIA Wine Ambassador, Wine Writer and Sommelier, One Michelin Star River Café Restaurant  |
| Canada | Will | Predhomme  | Wine writer, Professional Sommelier and Owner, Predhomme Consulting  |
| China  | James  | Teng  | Head Sommelier, Hakkasan Shangai  |
| Italy  | Pascal | Tinari | Head sommelier, One Michelin star Villa Maiella Restaurant  |
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|  | **Junior Judges**  |  |  |
| Russia  | Nikolay  | Chashchinov  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Cofounder, Director and Teacher, Millesime Wine School  |
| Brazil  | Alexandra  | Corvo  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Owner and Wine Instructor, Ciclo das Vinhas |
| Canada  | Brie  | Dema  | Sommelier at Langdon Hall Country House Hotel and Spa |
| Russia  | Veronika  | Denisova  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Deputy Director, Sommelier School Enotria  |
| Canada  | Jeremy  | Ennis  | Sommelier at Savoury, Westin Harbour Castle |
| Australia  | Vanessa  | Green  | Managing Director, Crimson Cartwheel |
| Australia  | Kara  | Maisano  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Sommelier & Wine Director, Masani Italian Dining & Terrace |
| Korea | Claire  | Nam  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Wine Communicator, Blic Wine  |
| Italy | Livia  | Re | Freelance Wine Writer  |
| Canada  | Richard | Sagala  | VIA Wine Ambassador, PDG / CEO, École In Vino Veritas |
| Hong Kong  | JC  | Veins  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Deputy Wine Editor, Spirito di Vino Asia |
| Singapore  | Wai Xin  | Chan  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Wine Communicator, winexine.sg |
| China  | Oliver  | Zhou  | VIA Wine Ambassador, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Vinehoo.com  |
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|  | **FreeWine** |  |  |
| USA  | Alice  | Feiring  | FreeWine Wine Without Walls Chair, Wine Journalist and Author  |
| Italy  | Pietro  | Vergano  | Consorzio Restaurant, Turin  |
| Italy  | Diego  | Sorba  | Il Tabarro, Parma  |
| UK  | Doug  | Wregg  | Les Caves de Pyrene, London |
| USA | Pascaline  | Lepeltier  | Master Sommelier and Beverage Director of Rouge Tomate |

**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 49th edition Vinitaly counted some 4,000 exhibitors on a 100,000 square meter area and 150,000 visitors including 2,600 journalists from 46 different countries. The next edition of the fair will take place on 10 - 13 April 2016. The premier event to Vinitaly, OperaWine (www.vinitalyinternational.com) “Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers,” will unite international wine professionals on April 9th 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 has now also organized its very first Certification Course with the aim of creating new Ambassadors of Italian Wine in the World.

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