

Press Release
For Immediate Release

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In Los Angeles “the truth is in (Italian) wine” with Vinality International Academy Ambassador course coming up in February

The Vinality International Academy (VIA) is proud to bring the adventure of Italian wine to the US this year with its first 2019 Italian Wine Ambassador certification course to be held in Los Angeles, California, from February 18th to 22nd (applications are currently being accepted). The location for the 11th edition of this highly-professionalizing training course is the gorgeous boutique hotel The Line located in the heart of trendy K-Town, between Hollywood and downtown LA.

Vinality International in collaboration with Veronafiere are working on the finishing touches of the Los Angeles edition of the VIA Italian Wine Ambassador certification course next February and enrollment is still open. The re-formatted, tasting-intensive Italian wine course is taught by VIA Faculty Sarah Heller MW and Henry Davar, both experienced professionals and educators. Sector professionals who want to be challenged and take an in-depth survey of Italian wines and their native grape varieties are welcome to submit their candidacy for this rewarding course. The course will expose candidates to the theory behind Italian wine with lectures on grape varieties, styles, and terroirs. Both guided tastings and self-guided tasting labs will also be a huge component of the curriculum, allowing students to practice tasting in preparation for the final exam.



The Italian Wine Ambassador certification course in Los Angeles comes at a perfect time, for the US wine industry is growing steadily and the Italian wine sector can exploit this growth and play a major role in it. According to the State of the Wine Industry 2018 report compiled by Robert MacMillan (EVP and Founder of the Silicon Valley Bank Division), the U.S. wine market has been getting larger since 1994, with “long-term trends of increasing volumes and higher prices.” Another study released by Nomisma Wine Monitor before Vinality 2018 and presented in Wine Enthusiast further confirms the crucial role the U.S. wine market plays for Italian wine: “*The U.S. emerged as Italian wines’ largest market based on value. U.S. sales are expected to top \$2.49 billion (€2 billion) in 2022, which is up from \$1.99 billion (€1.6 billion) last year.*” Moreover, among the 50 States, California is the area where wine consumption is at the top, with an overall volume of 148,347 gallons, as documented in a report compiled by the National Institutes of Health and

discussed in a recent article in [VinePair](#). California, according to this report, is also the top state for wine production, producing roughly 90% of American wine. The size and importance of the U.S. wine market and the crucial role of the state of California have been determining factors that pushed VIA to stage the Italian Wine Ambassador certification course in Los Angeles. With a growing market, more wine professionals are needed, particularly professionals with well-rounded knowledge of the wine product and consumer trends. The Italian Wine Ambassador certification course provides an answer to this very need.

VIA Italian Wine Ambassador certification course prepares candidates to rigorously comprehend the diversity of Italian wines, their regions, grape varieties along with Italy's food culture. [VIA candidate Ka-Lai Carrie Wong](#), a wine writer and consultant who took the Italian Wine Ambassador course in Hong Kong last November, comments on the systematic approach to the course: *"The course... tries to teach us about Italian wines in a systematic way. I have been to many seminars and wine tastings for Italian wines, they usually only cover one small part of Italy, whereas this course covers everything, North to South. ... The second thing that is good about the course is the mentioning of the foods, it helps us also to understand why the wines are the way they are and how they go well with the foods of each region."* [Roddy Ropner \(VIA Italian Wine Ambassador and director at Wellspring Wines in Japan\)](#), who also took the re-formatted, tasting intensive course in Hong Kong, highlights some of the aspects he found most interesting: *"There are 3 aspects that I enjoyed: they go in depth into some of the grape varieties; the second point is the tying of the grapes to the region and the wines; and the last thing I like about the course is that there is a lot of background information, historical references, and food culture."*



[Students sampling Italian wines during the numerous tasting sessions of the VIA Italian Wine Ambassador certification course.]

The Italian Wine Ambassador certification course is a real opportunity to stay ahead of the game and to further candidates' careers in the wine sector. Upon completion of the course, individuals are motivated to connect with their peers and clients to spread, in turn, knowledge of Italian wines in their respective markets and to consumers. [VIA Italian Wine Expert Francesco Marchio](#), who achieved the prestigious title in Hong Kong, comments on the importance of being part of the VIA community worldwide: *"(In Hong Kong) I met other people that share the same passion. Being part of VIA is great because our final goal at the end of the day is to get to know Italian wines and share our knowledge to the rest of the world. I am very proud of being*

part of VIA.” The VIA community today counts 170 certified Italian Wine Ambassadors and Experts, but since its inception in 2014 it engaged more than 450 wine professionals worldwide.

Applications for the Los Angeles Italian Wine Ambassador certification course are currently being accepted. The application form can be filled in on the Vinality International Academy website and additional information on the course and the venue can also be requested at via@vinalitytour.com.

About: The grand Vinality 2019 will be held from April 7th to the 10th. Every year, Vinality 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 Vinality, OperaWine “Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers,” which will be held on the 6th of April, one day prior to Vinality 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 Vinality International travels to several countries such as Russia, China, USA and Hong Kong thanks to its strategic arm abroad, Vinality International. In February 2014 Vinality International launched an educational project, the Vinality 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 seventh edition of its Certification Course and today counts 157 Italian Wine Ambassadors and 13 Italian Wine Experts.