

Press Release  
For Immediate Release

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## **Italian Signature Wines Academy believes in wine education and joins Vinality International Academy as its official Supporter**

**In the recently renovated Vinality International Academy (VIA)'s ecosystem, the role of the Supporters has become central. Trade association Italian Signature Wines Academy (ISWA) was one of the first organizations in the Italian wine industry to believe in VIA's educational mission, becoming its official Supporter and joining VIA also in Los Angeles, California, during the most recent Italian Wine Ambassador certification course.**

The first 2019 Italian Wine Ambassador course was held in Los Angeles from February 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> and saw the participation of 27 wine business professionals, of which 7 were awarded the prestigious Italian Wine Ambassador title after passing a challenging exam. Students were accompanied in their learning journey by VIA Faculty Sarah Heller MW and Henry Davar, who delivered lectures on Italian wine regions, grape varieties, and food culture, and guided them during tasting sessions featuring over one hundred Italian wine labels.



Together with the Faculty, the new VIA Chief Scientist Prof. Attilio Scienza, and the Institutional Advisory Board consisting of Federvini, Federdoc, FIVI, and Unione Italiana Vini, the official VIA Supporters play a fundamental role in VIA's ecosystem. Supporters include wine consortiums as well as regional and private business networks. By joining VIA, Supporters gain the privilege to follow VIA's educational tour in their preferred areas of impact, based on their strategic business priorities. During the Italian Wine Ambassador course in Los Angeles, for example, VIA Supporter Italian Signature Wines Academy (ISWA) provided wine labels for one of VIA's Tasting Labs. In the reformatted curriculum, these Labs are additional walk-around tasting sessions where Supporters personally introduce a selection of their own labels, describing the wineries, terroirs, and grape varieties.

ISWA is a strategic alliance among eight top brands in the Italian wine industry: Allegrini (Veneto), Arnaldo Caprai (Umbria), Feudi di San Gregorio (Campania), Fontanafredda (Piemonte), Frescobaldi (Toscana),

Masciarelli (Abruzzo), Planeta (Sicilia), and Villa Sandi (Veneto). The main objective of the alliance is to jointly promote and develop the Made in Italy brand on the international markets.

The similarities among the eight wineries make it easy to reach the common objective. These large wineries share the same business vision, a drive for innovation, a brand image tailor-made for international consumers, and a prominent position and notoriety in their regions of origin. These assets and values are instrumental to the common effort: Italian Signature Wines Academy strives to improve the image of quality wine by developing initiatives that highlight the rich environmental, archaeological, historic, artistic, and anthropological heritage as well as local resources and viticultural landscape.

The educational mission is what connects VIA's work with ISWA. Similarly to VIA in its offer of a complete educational path on the diversity of Italian wines, ISWA is, at its core, a wine academy, that is, an institution which promotes the culture of Italian wine on the international stage through specialist training programs for trade professionals on topics covering all the main issues of the sector in partnership with the main Italian universities.

On the relationship between VIA and ISWA, President of Italian Signature Wines Academy Marilisa Allegrini comments: *"To communicate to the whole world the richness of Italian wine is a matter of deep knowledge, competence, and passion. While the first two ingredients are, in a sense, the prologue of the work of art, passion is the work itself. It is for this reason that the relationship between ISWA and VIA, in my view, must transmit passion first of all. It is in this way only that a highly-qualifying educational path becomes successful and productive, therefore creating a lasting, unbreakable alliance in the supply chain: territories, products, storytelling."*

The same objectives also drive VIA's work. In the words of Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International: *"Our goal is to become the gold standard in Italian wine education and in order to do that we need important supporters in addition to the institutional ones of our Advisory Board. So the eight ISWA wineries which are among the key players in Italy are key to help us in our endeavor. We are committed to the same values which drive the work of ISWA in Italy and abroad: innovation, internationalization, and quality. The Supporters' help for the Tasting Labs allows VIA course participants to discover and taste even more wines."*

Vinitaly International Academy strives to be the reference point for Italian wine education abroad, particularly through a self-sustaining ecosystem. On the one hand VIA Supporters assist VIA in spreading the gospel of Italian wine and oenological culture internationally; on the other, VIA has implemented a number of dedicated initiatives that will allow Supporters to meet their promotional objectives.

To date, five associations and consortiums have joined VIA as Supporters. Since many stops will be included in the next VIA's educational journey (Chengdu, Verona, and New York to name just the ones in the first semester of 2019), many will also be the opportunities for growth for any association interested in accompanying VIA in its ambassadorial mission worldwide for Italian wine.

#### About:

The grand Vinitaly 2019 will be held from April 7th to the 10th. 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 the 6th of April, 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 seventh edition of its Certification Course and today counts 164 Italian Wine Ambassadors and 13 Italian Wine Experts.