



Press release  
For immediate release

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## **Native Grape Odyssey goes on a Russian Odyssey to discover that a Symphony needs a Maestro**

**On June 18th during a press event at the Enotria Wine School in Moscow, the Native Grape Odyssey (NGO) program officially launched its autumn 2019 activities in Russia. The press event also featured a tasting on wines from Central Italy and was led by Veronika Denisova, Deputy Director/Lecturer at the Enotria Wine School. Stevie Kim, General Coordinator of NGO, announced that NGO will stage a course on native European varieties called *NGO Maestro Course* from October 28th to November 1st 2019. The course will also feature a special Walk-Around Tasting.**

The Native Grape Odyssey (NGO) project presented its forthcoming *NGO Maestro Course* at a press conference on June 18th at the Enotria Wine School in Moscow, Russia. The *NGO Maestro Course*, scheduled at the end of October 2019, will train participants through a focus on the native vines of Europe, culminating also with a scaled-up Walk-Around Tasting. This course is part of the NGO project's mission and initiatives under the aegis of the European Union's *Enjoy it's from Europe* label and aimed at creating spokespeople that can spread the culture of indigenous European vine varieties and the wines they produce.

The *NGO Maestro Course* will consist of four days of teaching activities, with a final exam on the fifth day. Through classroom style lessons and Tasting Labs, students will be able to build expansive knowledge and understanding of native grapes, as well as their potential expressions. Stevie Kim, General Coordinator of the NGO project, explained that what makes the *NGO Maestro Course* so innovative and unique: "*The NGO Maestro Course follows a regional approach, so as to demonstrate the way that indigenous grapes are tied to the climate, terroir and winemaking traditions of the areas where they originated.*" The *NGO Maestro Course*'s Tasting Lab will be held each day after the theory lectures. These sessions of group tasting will allow for a deeper understanding of territories, wineries and wines. Kim also explained that these labs have a community building component to them: "*These informal tastings encourage engagement and discussion between students, building a community that continues beyond the course.*"

The Moscow edition of the *NGO Maestro Course* will invite special VIP guests, NGO course participants and professionals in the Russian wine sector to take part in an impressive Walk Around Tasting taking place in conjunction with Vinitaly Russia 2019, the Russian edition of the largest wine exhibition in Europe. The availability of wines in this period will be an incredible learning resource, providing course students with the opportunity to put theory into practice.



In addition to carrying out training activities for wine professionals such as the aforementioned tastings, the aim of NGO is also to produce educational materials that can become a reference guide for wine enthusiasts who want to expand their experience of the world of European wine. Although official European wine designations are essential for distinguishing between higher quality products, they can sometimes be confusing, particularly to foreign consumers. In order to provide a schematic and exhaustive explanation, the NGO project has planned the publication of six volumes within the three years of the project (2019-2021) written by leading experts in the field of Italian oenology and viticulture. Like the course, these books will trace a learning itinerary through the history and culture of the Italian wine territories, their geological origins, microclimates, grape varieties, viticultural techniques, as well as leading and emerging denominations of origin. Each volume will also feature a map of the itinerary and of the wine regions, and a glossary of technical terms.



*The participants of the NGO press conference and tasting with Stevie Kim, General Coordinator of the NGO project, and Veronika Denisova, Deputy Director and Lecturer at the Enotria Wine School.*

Once press event speeches had concluded, Veronika Denisova, Deputy Director and Lecturer at Enotria Wine School, took the floor and began to lead the afternoon's tasting. As a Vinitaly International Academy Italian Wine Ambassador, Denisova took guests on a journey through the regions of central Italy employing the signature NGO regional teaching approach. The seven wines selected included:

1. Plenio Verdicchio dei castelli di Jesi Classico Riserva 2016 Umani Ronchi
2. Campirosa Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo DOC 2018
3. Santa Maria Morellino di Scansano DOCG 2017 Frescobaldi
4. Poluce Nero Buono Lazio IGT 2017
5. Cesanese Lazio IGP 2012
6. Berardenga Chianti Classico Riserva DOCG 2015 Felsina
7. Collepiano Montefalco Sagrantino DOCG 2013 Arnaldo Caprai



The selection of these wines, both by region and by grape variety used, allowed guests to have a taste of the multiplicity of products that central Italy has to offer. The experience also helped illustrate the importance of the designations. Guests were impressed by the presentation and it has been hailed as a success all around; this was a definitely a win for Europe. Quality. Wine.

The press event held in Moscow has also laid the ground work for NGO's bigger picture for 2019, outlining similar events in Canada and Japan. The two key countries taking part in the NGO project will also be *NGO Maestro Course* destinations.

Applications for *NGO Maestro Course* in Russia are already open; people interested in participating can apply on [NGO website](#). Deadline for applications for Moscow is 13<sup>th</sup> September.

**About:** [Native Grape Odyssey](#) is a project financed by the European Union and managed by Unione Italiana Vini and Zante Agricultural Cooperatives Union for the promotion of PDO and PGI European wines abroad, in particular in three countries: Japan, Canada and Russia. In order to achieve this, the Native Grape Odyssey educational program will organize wine seminars, workshops and b2b meetings both in these countries and in Verona, Italy, inviting wine experts and influencers from these countries. These events, realized in the span of three years (2019-21) aim at creating awareness about European native wines abroad, in particular Italian and Greek wines, which share a long tradition and a high standard of quality.