

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Vinitaly International Academy announces scholarship for diversity and inclusion

Founder of Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) Stevie Kim, together with VIA faculty member Henry Davar, hosted a press event presenting the structure of the VIA program, and announcing a scholarship for diversity and inclusion. The event was held on August 4, 2021 at 4 pm, at Colangelo & Partners Office Tasting Room in New York.



Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International and the founder of Vinitaly International Academy, together with VIA faculty member Henry Davar, hosted media and trade for an exclusive happy hour tasting benchmark Italian wines and discovering the structure and impact of the VIA programme. During the event, Stevie Kim announced a new scholarship focusing on diversity and inclusion, enabling new students access to this unique Italian wine education program. “I realised underrepresented groups have not received appropriate support and attention during the development of the VIA program,” Kim said. “We would now like to make up for lost time by offering a tuition waving program.” Students will be able to apply immediately for the VIA Courses running in the USA in September in Boston, Houston and Seattle.

Henry Davar welcomed guests in person, with Stevie Kim attending virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. This first ever aperitivo in collaboration with Colangelo & Partners put the spotlight on the Vinitaly International Academy. This path to knowledge began in 2015 and has seen almost 900 students take the course. To date the program has produced 259 certified Italian Wine Ambassadors, 15 of which are Experts, from all over the world. Henry Davar was the first Ambassador to become an Expert upon

the first attempt and he is joined by Sarah Heller MW and Francesco Marchio as the VIA Faculty, supported by Professor Attilio Scienza as Scientific Consultant, with the patronage of the Italian Trade Agency (ITA).



Left: VIA Faculty Henry Davar IWE, and VIA Founder Stevie Kim (on screen)
Right: Henry Davar with some of the guests. From left to right: Jermaine Stone (Cru Luv Wine), Henry Davar (VIA), Shakera Jones (Seventifty, BlackGirlsDineToo), Lisa Denning (Grape Collective)

The Happy Hour was an opportunity for guests to participate in an expertly guided tasting of key Italian wines, and to understand the importance of this top level certification program. VIA's dedication to a deep dive into Italian wine was demonstrated by Henry's unparalleled discussion of Italian wine grapes and zones, with his goal of giving "the history and backstory to connect students to the past and the romance of 500+ native grapes." The constant input of new information "makes for compelling storytelling," Henry says, as he explains the formalisation of the course and the ongoing collecting and gathering of new material. Books written specifically for the course include *Italian Wine Unplugged*, *Sangiovese, Lambrusco and Other Wine Stories*, *The Jumbo Shrimp Guide to Italian Wine* and *The Jumbo Shrimp Guide to International Grape Varieties*, proving the commitment of VIA to providing the most in depth and rigorous course of Italian wine study.

After the tasting, Stevie Kim concluded the event with her signature call to action to everyone in the room, "spread the gospel of Italian wine," with the VIA program truly providing an incomparable path to Italian wine knowledge.

About: [Vinitaly International Academy](#) (VIA) aims to be the gold standard of Italian wine education. It offers a complete educational path with standardized courses that will teach professionals and educators to master the diversity of Italian wine in a rigorous, organized manner. VIA's main objective is to foster a global network of highly qualified professionals such as Italian Wine Ambassadors and Italian Wine Experts: in turn, they will support and promote Italian wine throughout the world. VIA was founded by Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International. The new VIA ecosystem avails of the guidance of Italian trade associations Federdoc, Federvini, Vignaioli Indipendenti FIVI, and Unione Italiana Vini as members of the Institutional Advisory Board. Italian vine genetics scholar, Prof. Attilio Scienza, oversees VIA's scientific and educational direction as the Chief Scientist. VIA Faculty Sarah Heller MW and Henry Davar teach the flagship Italian Wine Ambassador course. To date there are 259 Certified Italian Wine Ambassadors and 15 Italian Wine Experts.