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Vitaly International Academy Confirms Multi-National Courses in Hong Kong and Russia

Despite the current challenges around the world, Vitaly International Academy remains undaunted in its commitment to bringing the gold standard of Italian wine education to students across the globe. This spring sees the prestigious course taking place simultaneously in Russia and Hong Kong from 28 February through 2 March.



VIA Faculty Sarah Heller MW, who will lead the classes from Hong Kong

VIA will launch its educational program for 2022 with its 3-day hybrid course taking place simultaneously in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Hong Kong under the expert tutelage of Sarah Heller MW. The internationally respected course is now in its 21st edition, having successfully pivoted to an agile format during the first wave of COVID lockdowns in early 2020. Since then, the course has continued to develop and adapt, with more international venues planned for the future.

Veronafiere has been present for two decades in Russia, historically a country that has always been among the first stages of Vitaly's globalisation process. In light of the strong interest and involvement of Russian wine professionals during the latest edition of VIA Verona in 2021, the decision was made to organise the first edition of the Vitaly International Academy in Russia and the Vitaly Roadshow in the run-up to Vitaly 2022, with the support of two on-site Italian Wine Ambassadors, Veronica Denisova and Anna Baranova.



Russian VIA Italian Wine Ambassador, class of 2021, Daria Pukhova commented, “VIA was the most in-depth program I have ever experienced, with a precise focus on native grapes and soils, in connection with historical context.”

Hong Kong has been the setting for three previous VIA courses, two in-person and one agile format, and there are currently 18 certified Italian Wine Ambassadors in Hong Kong. This fourth edition of VIA Hong Kong will harness the engagement of Chinese wine professionals in the world of Italian wine and offer another opportunity to benefit from the in-depth, content-rich VIA course material. VIA offers a complete training course aimed at providing a solid scientific focus on the native grapes of Italy and on the characteristics of the 20 regions’ biodiversity, history, culture, and business. To date, out of almost 900 VIA candidates, 262 have achieved the title of Italian Wine Ambassador, of which 15 achieved the title Italian Wine Expert.

VIA Russia/Hong Kong 2022 will be held from February 28 to March 2, 2022. The course will be taught in person in Hong Kong by Sarah Heller MW, with simultaneous online links to Moscow and St. Petersburg. In Moscow, the hybrid style course will be followed by Vinitaly Roadshow on March 3.

Heller remarked, “I’m delighted that, despite challenging conditions, in the first quarter of the year we’ve managed to put together an exceptional learning and tasting program for our loyal VIA community in Hong Kong and Russia — we have experienced a wave of enthusiasm for Italian wine in this part of the world and it is great to be able to capitalise on that energy and welcome ever more people into the VIA family.”

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 262 Certified Italian Wine Ambassadors of which 15 are also Italian Wine Experts.