

Wednesday, 9 March 2022

Vinality International Academy celebrates another successful course in New York City

From Friday, 4 March through Sunday, 6 March Vinality International Academy held its' Agile Edition certification course for Italian Wine Ambassadors. The International Wine Center in Manhattan generously opened their doors to the VIA Team and students for the 22nd Edition of the renowned course, respected worldwide as the most rigorous Italian wine education program available.



VIA welcomed 18 students for two intensive days of tastings and masterclasses. With the support and patronage of ITA - Italian Trade Agency, the students tasted 38 wines under the guidance of VIA Faculty member Henry Davar, IWE. On Sunday the students submitted required video projects and faced the challenging 2.5-hour exam, composed of 2 blind tastings, a series of short answer questions and 100 multiple choice questions. At the end of the day, VIA was proud to announce the certification of four new Ambassadors for the USA, bringing the total to 97 in the country and 271 in the world.



This edition of VIA was the second to include a tuition waiver program for Diversity and Inclusion, which was awarded to two participating students. Tuition was waived for these students, who came highly recommended by professionals in the USA wine sector. Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International has committed to rectifying the under-representation of women and people of color in the wine industry. As she explained, “Under-represented groups have not received appropriate support and attention during the development of the VIA program and we continue to look to make up for lost time by offering a tuition waving program.”

Recipient Nicole Rodriguez remarked, “I started to study Italian wine back in 2009 when I fell in love with an exclusively Italian wine list in Baltimore. Since then, I’ve continued to build on my Italian wine knowledge and this opportunity for professional development on Italy, the country with the most indigenous grape diversity, is something I loved exploring. Joining the certification course is a wonderful opportunity to acquire more credentials to teach and spread the word on Italian wine.”

Students came from all across the USA, including students with Turkish, Japanese, Mexican, and Norwegian nationality. New Italian Wine Ambassador Larissa Lawrence commented, “I was absolutely thrilled to read of the VIA Certification Course. As an importer of artisanal Italian wine into Mexico, I work directly with 17 wonderful traditional family producers from across Italy. I read endlessly about Italian wine making, grapes and regions, and visit our producers at least once a year. To be able to supplement my personal and practical studies with structured classroom instruction alongside other students, equally as passionate as I about Italian wine, is truly a dream!”

VIA New York 2022 warmly welcomes our four new Ambassadors; we are very proud of their achievement. The following students passed the difficult in-depth exam: Sunny Gandara, Larissa Lawrence, Jennifer Spiering, Catalina Vieira. Congratulations! Following the success of VIA New York, Vinitaly International Academy looks forward to the return of its annual flagship course in Verona, which will be held from 4-7 April with over 50 students selected from around the world.

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