

Thursday, 7 April 2022

Vinitaly International Academy Welcomes 21 Italian Wine Ambassadors

Vinitaly International Academy held its flagship course in Verona from 4-7 April. The course comprised 55 students from all over the world, including a Diversity Tuition Waiver student, and took place in the headquarters of VIA at Veronafiere, in the run up to the 54th edition of Vinitaly. The new Ambassadors join 271 colleagues from 38 countries and enjoyed a week full of masterclasses, guided tastings, and special lectures by renowned Professor Attilio Scienza.



The 23rd edition of Vinitaly International Academy was a joyful week full of intensive learning experiences, networking, tasting, studying, and a little bit of good old panic. VIA is the gold standard of Italian wine education and this year showed off the course to its fullest potential. With the in-person return of both faculty members, Sarah Heller MW and Henry Davar IWE, the course rebounded from COVID restrictions with a subscription of over 50 international students and a tasting list over three days that encompassed close to 140 wines in preparation for a grueling exam that has a typical pass rate of 25%.

This edition of VIA saw an enthusiastic, passionate and seriously studious group of selected students with a broad base of experience in the wine sector spanning buyers, retailers, educators, writers, enthusiasts, sommeliers, and those very new to the world of Italian wine. VIA aims to create the longest table, welcoming everyone who is curious about Italian wine to join the conversation.

The course offers students a hybrid learning format, with a series of online lectures in preparation for the in-person event in Verona, where students are immediately immersed in the Italian wine world, with unique experiences such as an opportunity to taste the wine of the historic families of Valpolicella at the



famous Antica Bottega del Vino at a private event, as well as master classes hosted by various wine consortiums from all over Italy. Professor Attilio Scienza, the VIA scientific advisor, also attended the course and delivered spectacular lectures with up to the minute research in vine DNA and history, specifically for the benefit of VIA students.

Students faced a challenging 4-part exam on Thursday 7 April, which resulted in the inauguration of 21 new Italian Wine Ambassadors, the most successful class to date. Congratulations to all the participants, all of whom have now become members of the VIA family, intent upon spreading the love for Italian wine across the globe.

The list of Italian Wine Ambassadors, Verona Flagship Class of 2022: Peggy Baudon, Bev Bourdin, Julian Di Donato, Noell Dorsey, Jodie Hellman, Cedric Izri, Elissar Kurban, Jules Lamon, Chunxia Liu, Michael Markarian, Hee Sung Park, Gabby Rossouw, Christopher Sachs, Thomas Sartori, Erik Schneider, Rodrigo A. Sepulveda Schulz, Emiliano Stratico, Scott Thomas, Jessica van der Schee, Ezra Wicks, Ashlee Brianne Howell.

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