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# WINE TASTING TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2012 VINITALY FAIR

Organic wine, an “off-grid” cellar and the best labels a wine lover doesn't have to miss: FDL suggestions from this year's edition of the Italian wine fair

By Davide Oltolini on April 06, 2012

This year, once again, Vinitaly, one of the world's most important wine trade fairs, met the high expectations of wine lovers and professionals. More than 140,000 visitors from over 120 countries gathered in Verona to discover the latest labels, emerging trends and innovations in wine-production.

The event began with the inaugural evening OperaWine - Finest Italian Wines: 100 Great Producers: a special tasting hosted in the Palazzo della Ragione, organized by the American magazine *Wine Spectator*. For the first time in Europe, they proposed a selection of 100 wines, all from a single country, Italy. Among their “Top 100”, were exceptional wines like the *Bolgheri Superiore Tenuta Guado al Tasso 2008* from *Antinori*, the *Ornellaia 2006* from the *Tenuta dell'Ornellaia*, the *Barolo Bricco Rocche 2007 Ceretto* and the *Cuvée Annamaria Clementi 2004 Cà del Bosco*.

If you couldn't make it to Verona during this most recent edition of Vinitaly, here's a summary of the highlights – selected and put together by the 2012 Vinitaly Trade Fair.

## ORGANIC AND OFF-GRID

Vinitaly 2012 confirmed the increased attention to products made from organically grown grapes, like the *Valdobbiadene Superiore Millesimato Ius Naturae* by Bortolomiol. To better satisfy consumers that are seeking out “healthier” wines, there was also the first “zero added sulfates” Soave on show, the *Runcaris FreeWine Fattori*, which is made exclusively from mechanical and physical processes. Companies like Salcheto – the first “off-grid” cellar – operates without traditional energy networks, and to taste their *Vino Nobile of Montepulciano*, one had to generate energy by pedalling for a minute at the label's stand.

## LUGANA WHITE WHINE

Nestled between the regions of Lombardy and Veneto, it's impossible to overlook *Lugana*, one of today's most sought-after and popular white wine, made from a local variety of *Trebbiano* grapes called “turbiana”, which guarantees structure and longevity thanks to the temperate climate surrounding Lake Garda. Many companies at the Fair, including Ottella, Feliciano and Provenza, with the noteworthy *Fabio Contato 2009*, which received the 3 Glasses rating from *Gambero Rosso* guide.

## DEDICATED TO RED LOVERS

Among the great reds of Northern Italy, the spotlight was on both *Amarone* – muchly appreciated by female visitors thanks to its “elegant drinkability”, like the *Villa Borghetti Pasqua* – and *Barolo*, like the *Luigi Arnulfo Costa di Bussia*, which was dedicated to the first American exporter of this exceptional wine. The Piedmont region was also highly popular with its *Barbera d'Asti*, with more than 2,000 tastings over the four days in the Fair.

Tuscany of course was there to show off its prestigious wines like *Petra* – which features the elegance of a Merlot and the character of a Cabernet Sauvignon. But Vinitaly also presented the *Rosso di Montalcino Bonsai* from the *Podere Le Ripi*, which is made from possibly the densest

vineyards in the world: 62,500 plants per hectare. Sicilian reds continue to be appealing, and not only those based around the Nero d'Avola variety, like the Baglio di Pianetto Carduni 2005, from Conte Marzotto, made from Petit Verdot.

Of course, Vinitaly is a showcase not only for wines, and within the Italian panorama a lot of attention was paid to the *amaro Pratum Bonaventura Maschio*, which is produced from the mulch of grasses that are untreated and left to grow wildly in the Friuli region. The blend is obtained by grass varieties like *Yarrow, Wild Thyme and Mint, Plantain, Galium Verum* and *Thistle*.