Vinitaly International Academy travels to Vancouver and Edmonton

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As beer sales decline in Canada, Canadians are increasingly drinking more wine. It is therefore natural that Vinitaly International returned to this important market, in Vancouver on the 28th of April at Terminal City Club 30, and in Edmonton on the 2nd of May at Shaw Conference Centre on the occasion of Northern Lands, the most important Food and Wine festival in Canada.

According to governmental statistics, the market share of beer has fallen from 48% to 42% in the past 10 years while wine is increasing its presence from 26% to 31%. All provinces and territories have reported gains particularly in their wine sales, with an annual growth of over 5%. Currently the market sales of wine in Canada mark over 480 million litres per year (SOURCE: Statcan, May 2016, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/160510/dq160510b-eng.htm). With a strong interest in wines from both inside and

outside of the country, there is no doubt that it will soon become one of the most important markets around the world.

Vinitaly International returned to Canada with a two-stop roadshow in Vancouver and Edmonton, not only with a series of Vinitaly International Academy executive wine seminars run in parallel with a B2B Walk Around Tasting, but also with “Agents Tasting”, a special initiative where some of the producers have the opportunity to get introduced to local trade agents interested in Italian wine import.

On the 28th of April in Vancouver, Dr. Ian D’Agata, the Scientific Director of Vinitaly International Academy (VIA) conducted “A panorama of Italy’s great wines from North to South”, a VIA seminar introducing 15 wines that display the great diversity of Italian grapes and wines of the Italia peninsula. On 2nd of May in Edmonton, on the occasion of Northern Lands, 6 other seminars conducted by Dr.D’Agata and other well known professionals from the wine sector. Among them, Michaela Morris, wine writer and educator based in Vancouver who is also a VIA certified Italian Wine Expert, led “Made in Italy: Blending for the Better” with William Predhomme, Managing Director of Predhomme Inc.

“I can say that the interest in Italian wine across Canada is very strong and as such, there are great opportunities for Italian wine producers. Last year in British Columbia where Vancouver is, the Italian category grew by 8% in value. Italian wine has shown steady growth over the last three years and has taken over Australian wines by both volume and value to be the second largest import category after the USA. These seminars will allow us to look at a number of unique different native Italian grapes and discuss the specific characteristics they bring to a wine”, says Morris. “For example, we have a fantastic comparison of diverse Lambruscos, which should change people’s mind about this often misunderstood wine. I have a huge affection for Lambruscos and am thrilled to share that with everyone. I am all about engaging the trade and

getting them excited about Italian wine”.

Cathy Huyghe, wine columnist at Forbes.com, and co-founder of Enolytics also confirms, “Italian wine offers, always, a world of learning. The opportunity to focus on different styles and origins of its sparkling wines opens the door for an engaging and nuanced conversation around the glass”.

2nd of May at Edmonton marked Vinitaly International’s first time collaboration with Northern Lands, the most important Food and Wine festival in Canada. For the first time, Italy will be the featured country, with May 2nd and 3rd entirely dedicated to Italian Wine.

Stevie Kim, Managing Director of Vinitaly International comments, “Our Canadian contingency of the VIA community is fast-growing and significant. In full discloser, Vinitaly International has not been to Canada very much although a very important market. We are thankful to Ian D’Agata a native Canadian, who was able to bridge this gap nevertheless to a wider audience of Italian wine trade professionals.”