Drink Italian “Bubbles”

F.G. (November 23, 2011)



Franciacorta, Italy's answer to French Champagne hails from a small land in Lombardy. Oscar Farinetti - Eataly's founder - toasted with the press to Prime Minister Mario Monti’s sake, raising a cup of the finest ‘bubbles’, or ‘bollicine’, as Italians call them.

Italians would say that Franciacorta is a tiny “fazzoletto” (napkin) of land in the heart of Lombardy, which embraces the territories of nineteen municipalities in the Brescia province. It is the land where the finest Italian sparkling wines come from.

“Bubbles” from Franciacorta, as they are referred to by their 191 producers, who joined efforts and created a Consortium in 1990, are produced according to a very restrictive protocol that earned the Consortium’s wines the prestigious “DOCG” denomination – the quality denomination that the Italian government awards to the specialty products whose original production location is certified and guaranteed.

Franciacorta’s wines are now available on the American market, and the official introductions were made with a luscious four-courses lunch at Eataly’s Manzo [2] restaurant. Oscar Farinetti flew to New York for the occasion, and he really wanted to be present at the event, he tells i-Italy: “Eataly is the

only restaurant in this city that doesn’t serve French Champagne. Eataly, however, is the restaurant with the highest total sales, and it’s the third most visited place in New York City after the Empire State Building and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. We don’t sell Champagne, because we want to sell Italian products and tell their stories.”

The history of Italian sparkling wines is long and glorious, Farinetti explains: “Italian ‘bubbles’ were first produced in the 1850s. The Piedmontese learned the techniques from the French, but then Ferrari picked them up in north-eastern Italy, and over the last fifty years the producers from the Brescia province took over. Today they are number one.”

Selling Italian ‘bubbles’ to the American consumers will be a challenge. “Americans drink Prosecco, but they are not familiar with these premium sparkling wines. It’s easier to speak Chianti and Barolo with them,” Farinetti tells i-Italy.

Franciacorta CEO Giuseppe Salvioni is confident that the American bet is one the Franciacorta wines can win. “With all due respect for our French cousins’ product, but they bottle Peugeot and Citroen, we bottle Ferrari and Maserati. The quality of our wines is a hard fact, and the passion we put in them is extremely high.”

Before moving over to the four gourmand courses of the menu created by Chef Michael Toscano, Farinetti said to be very excited about his first return to the United States after Berlusconi resigned. “È una figata!” (“It’s so cool!”), he broke out. “We finally have a group of capable people in charge, you’ll see, we’re going to make it, even if here they all believed we were hopeless!”

He then toasted to Prime Minister Mario Monti’s sake, raising a cup of the finest ‘bubbles’, or ‘bollicine’, as Italians call them.

Source URL: http://ftp.iitaly.org/magazine/focus/life-people/article/drink-italian-bubbles

Links
[1] http://ftp.iitaly.org/files/bollicine1322028410jpg
[2] http://eatalyny.com/