

## **The Flavor of Authenticity at the New York Wine Expo**

Natasha Lardera (March 08, 2013)



Over 8,000 consumers, trade representatives and members of the press flocked to the Expo over the weekend to indulge in a taste of authentic Italy. 41 Italian companies, including wine producers, olive oil manufacturers and importers, cheese makers and foodies, came together in the Italian Pavilion under the guidance of the Italian Trade Commission.

The [Italian Trade Commission](#) [2], in collaboration with the [New York Wine Expo](#) [3], presented a much anticipated Italian Pavilion this March 1st-3rd on site at the Jacob Javitz Center Galleria. Over 8,000 consumers, trade representatives and members of the press flocked to the Expo over the weekend to experience and certainly indulge in a taste of authentic Italy. Indeed, the Italian Pavilion featured indigenous and international wine varietals from Abruzzo, Emilia Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Lombardy, Le Marche, Piedmont, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Veneto and Umbria but also showcased several types of what many have dubbed Italy's Liquid Gold from award winning olive oil producers from Abruzzo, Calabria, Campania, Le Marche, Sicily and Umbria.



"The beginning of our collaboration with the organizers of the Boston Wine Expo and the New York Wine Expo dates back to three years ago," Italian Trade Commissioner, Aniello Musella tells i-italy, "At first our contribution was much more limited, yet it grows every year. This year our partnership is much larger and Italy has the largest pavilion at the show. We have 41 Italian companies, 39 out of them are producers hailing directly from Italy. The rest are importers, representatives of the olive oil and cheese industry and even magazines. They all relish the opportunity to discuss their products and provide a guided tasting experience to visitors. Mostly, we are representing wines, the majority already are available on the American market, others are looking for importers."

Analysis of 2012 data published by the [US Department of Commerce](#) [4] for US wine and vermouth imports reveals Italy retains its market leadership position carving out a 29.5% US market share valued at an estimated 1.5 billion dollars. Further news that certainly bodes well for Italian wine exports to the US were recent comments made by respected market analyst Jon Fredrikson at the [Unified Grape Symposium](#) [5] noting that America is the largest wine market in the world; consuming 13% of global production.

"Italy's ample array of quality wines directly responds to the growing interest in wine stateside," Italian Trade Commissioner, Aniello Musella comments, "This interest has been partially fueled by high quality Italian restaurants and someliers who seek out interesting wine offerings and millennials' adventuresome spirit and purchasing habits; by a strong group of American foodies who totally cherish Italy's food culture and work hard for its promotion on the American tables; and to improved marketing efforts made by Italian producers."

"Together they have highlighted amazing lesser known Italian wine regions and wines creating a demand for these wines as well," the Commissioner continues, "in the last fifteen years we got to know wines that were virtually unknown. Primitivo from Puglia or Nero D'Avola from Sicily are an example of this. Another example is Prosecco, cherished by younger generations who enjoy a high quality sparkling wine available for a better price than champagne."

Mr. Musella particularly wanted to emphasize the goal of participating at events like the Wine Expo. "The Italian Trade Commission works hard on the continuous promotion of authentic Italian products and wines. We do it on a daily basis and then we have some important events, like this expo, where our efforts are even magnified. We are here to help importers and consumers in promoting and recognizing the authenticity of Italian products. We fight hard against imitations. The phenomenon of Italian Sounding is a real plague that causes serious economic damages."

"The olive oil industry is one of the most affected by this curse," Nazzareno Callipo owner of [Gourmet Cooking & Living](#) [6], an importer and distributor of Italian extra virgin olive oils, says "Italy is said to sell more oil than it actually produces. If we just rely on math, things just do not add up. If a product is not guaranteed as original by the European Community or other recognized government institutions it can be easily falsified. That is why both the American and the European governments are working hard in protecting producers and their products. We are here at the show to educate consumers, answer all their questions and promote high quality Italian products. This is the best place to be right now."

A special addition to the New York Wine Expo this year, was the [Italian Cheese Road Tour](#) [7] and POP UP SHOP featuring Asiago, Piave, Valtellina Casera, and Grana Padano DOP cheeses presented by Agriform in collaboration with e-tailer [igourmet.com](#). The Italian Cheese Road Tour aims to engage and educate attendees about Italy's bounty of quality cheeses. New York's beloved Italian Cheese Guru, [Lou Di Palo](#) [8], was the featured speaker at the Expo's sold out seminar Italian Cheese's X Factor presented by Agriform in collaboration with the Italian Trade Commission. Lou discussed how typicity, provenance and maturation regimes contribute to the irresistible taste of DOP cheeses.

The show's program also welcomed the participation of cookbook author and host of PBS' [Stress Free Cooking](#) [9]- Barbara Seelig Brown. She was on hand to share tips, discuss authentic Italian ingredients and personalize a copy of one of her latest acclaimed cookbooks. Another terrific addition to the Pavilion was Italy's premiere food and cooking magazine [La Cucina Italiana Magazine](#) [10]. Staffers were on hand to share product picks and consult visitors on all things Italian including



wine, travel, gastronomy and more.

Overall, under the guidance of the Italian Trade Commission everybody was working hard on promoting the high quality and authenticity of Italian products. "It is easy to do when you are representing such a fantastic array of wines, cheese, olive oil and other authentic delicacies," Callipo concludes.

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