

Around the wine world

'Next-Gens' to boost US wine consumption

USA The number of regular wine drinkers in the US could reach 110 million by 2025, boosted by younger 'Next-Gen' consumers, according to a new study.

About 58 million people in the US – about 40% of the adult population – are classed as regular wine drinkers, but that figure could reach 109 million within the next decade, reported Wine Intelligence.

The research company described a shift in emphasis from today's 'Millennial' generation of young drinkers to 'Next-Generators' or Next-Gen consumers, who were born in or after 1995.

As these people reach legal drinking age, they are set to

play an increasingly influential role in the wine market, with 22.7 million Next-Gens drinking wine regularly by 2025.

The report said Next-Gen consumers shared Millennials' ambition and tech-savvy spirit, but were likely to be more entrepreneurial and money-driven, and less adventurous.

Some 57% of Next-Gens were keen to learn more about wine once they were old enough to drink it.

Whether one likes it or not, the fortunes of the world wine industry are inextricably linked to the behaviour of the American wine drinker over the next decade,' said Richard Halstead, operations director of Wine Intelligence.



Richard Halstead

Lafite's Chevallier steps back



Charles Chevallier

FRANCE Charles Chevallier is to step back from his role as technical director at Château Lafite Rothschild to be replaced by Eric Kähler.

Chevallier, who joined Domaines Barons de Rothschild in 1982, working first at Raussec in Sauternes, has spent 30 years as general technical director and estate manager, with primary responsibility for Lafite. From January, he will retire from his full-time post, taking a 'senior advisor' role.

Kähler, a colleague of Chevallier for more than 20 years and a veteran of DBR Lafite properties in China, Argentina, Languedoc-Roussillon and Chile, will take over as technical director of Lafite and other DBR Bordeaux estates.

Roederer to make still wines in Champagne

FRANCE Louis Roederer will make a still Pinot Noir from the 2015 harvest as part of the company's ongoing experimental work in Champagne, but vineyard director Jean-Baptiste Lecaillon is yet to decide whether to sell it.

'I planted the [Pinot Noir] vineyard in 2002, so it's been 13 years of work,' he said. 'This year, I thought the taste of the fruit was starting to show something, so I said let's do a 2015 red. We have a white as well from older Chardonnay vines.'

The one-hectare Pinot Noir vineyard in Mareuil-sur-Ay could produce up to 4,000 bottles of wine.

Vineyards escape Etna lava damage

ITALY Vineyards were unscathed as Mount Etna spewed lava ash 8km into the sky during the first eruption of its Voragine crater in two years.

The hour-long eruption on 3 December left nearby villages covered in ash and led to the closure of an airport – but, bizarrely, it could be a boost to local winemakers.

Ash emissions occurred from the New South East Crater, which will be greatly beneficial for vineyards, due to its fertilising effect, said Christian Litterio, of Tenuta delle Treve here.

Etna is Europe's latest active volcano, at 3,350m. Lava last hit vineyards in 1961.

In brief

■ US Marshals have been selling off nearly 5,000 authenticated bottles of fine wine previously owned by counterfeiter Rudy Kurniawan, including an array of rare Bordeaux, Burgundy and Champagne. Net proceeds from the sale will be returned to the victims of Kurniawan, who is serving a 10-year jail sentence, but has continued to appeal against his conviction.

■ Historic Loire Valley sparkling wine producer Bouvet-Ladubay has returned to the ownership of the Monmousseau family after a gap of more than 40 years. The family reacquired 100% of the shares in the business from India's United Spirits, now controlled by spirits giant Diageo. United Spirits had acquired the company after its unsuccessful attempt to buy Champagne Taittinger in 2006.

■ Would-be winemakers can win the chance to learn the secrets of six Bordeaux producers in a new competition run by the CIVB, the region's wine council. Winemakers taking part in the UK social media competition include Beslie Tesseron of Château Lafite-Rochet in St-Estèphe, plus producers from Saulesnes, St-Émilion, Pauillac, Blaye and Entre-Deux-Mers. More information at: www.03e-95-wine-maker.bordeaux.com/uk/

■ Online sales of wine and spirits in China rose strongly during the annual Singles' Day shopping festival. One retailer, Vesemeyne.com, doubled sales on its Tmall.com outlet versus last year, while wine and spirit retailers Sichuan 1919 and Juxian.com also reported record sales. Singles' Day, also called Guo Guo Jie, is celebrated on 11 November and has become the world's largest online shopping event.

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