



## Italian Grapevine

Italian Wine, Food, Culture, Life



### Best Wine Stars Shine in Milan

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It is always nice when a nice new wine event appears in the panorama of opportunities to taste. Last weekend in Milan, on May 12 and 13, **Best Wine Stars** kicked off with a splendid tasting in the **Museo Diocesano** of Milan, which provided the perfect spring background for tasting in the cloister area.



As their website proudly proclaims, this was a networking opportunity for producers, somms, distributors, restaurateurs, and wine lovers.



One of the high points were the Master Class wine tastings led by **Adua Villa**. I started off with bubbles – it should always start with the bubbly, right? – and ended with a Think Pink / Drink Pink session on trendy Italian rosés, so delightful for the season.



But my jaunt around the cloister was no less interesting: I met a few new women producers (well, new to me at least), including Giovanna Paternoster, with her label **Quarta Generazione**, and Manuela Gastel of **Podere Conca in Bolgheri**. These two radiant Italian women, with their wines, their smiles, and their land – one in Basilicata, a region to keep your eye on, and one in Bolgheri, home to Super Tuscans and much more – gave a special flavor to this event, as they told me about their wines with pride and enthusiasm. *Brave!* (In Italian, *good for you!*, but they are also quite fearless and brave!)



There were some interesting packaging ideas, like this eclectic collection of labels representing most of Italy's important wine regions, from the Veneto to Sicily, Puglia and Tuscany. With trendy, English language names like Nerd, Hipster and Hacker, this is a commercial venture with a young crowd in mind, hence the cartoon images on the labels. Well, not that young perhaps!



For me, it's hard to get my heart into a label that doesn't have a soul in a winery, in a region, in the land. Call me old fashioned!

Best Wine Stars was no place for old fashioned people, however, given the very new technology being used.



So, you have a chip on the bottom of your wine glass (*photo right*) which you pass over the same icon on a little modem thing-y that all the producers have (*photo left*). At that point, their wines appear, you tick off with your finger the ones you are trying, and the fact sheet is miraculously sent to your email. Makes tasting notes so much simpler! Only have to record my own reactions.

Not much food in sight, but one interesting cheesemaker made it worthwhile.



Lovingly distributed in little samples, and artistically displayed, this display case gives another whole meaning to the expression *cheese ball*.



A toast! To the organizers of Best Wine Stars on their first successful event!

*Alla prossima!*