

DiVine Wine Tours in Tuscany and Italian Regions

Jan 30: Antonio Sferlazzo, a wine passionate Italian consultant and journalist based in the Chianti wine district of Tuscany has been organizing individual and corporate customized private wine tours in Tuscany and other parts of Italy, for over 18 years for a select international clientele of wine lovers, and offers Tours specializing in Tuscany, Etna and Piedmont, Veneto through his company The DiVine Wine Tours, writes Subhash Arora who has been meeting him frequently during his trips to Italy and is quite impressed by its repertoire and passion



Antonio Sferlazzo of The DiVine Wine Tours

The DiVine Wine Tours has the following to offer:

- Accommodation in charming small 3*/4* country B & B, hotels and agriturismos in the beautiful countryside of Tuscany and Italy, and if requested, in 5* luxury resorts, chateaux or historic private villas with swimming pools
- Transfer (bus or minivan), with or without driver;
- Private visit and wine tasting of top wineries in Tuscany (or other regions) accompanied by qualified guides speaking multi-languages.
- Direct purchase of wines with the possibility of international delivery to your home (perhaps not suited for Indian travelers)
- Additional attractions such as: cooking classes; visits to Michelin stars restaurants; shopping in the most trendy fashion boutiques; visit of the Art cities such as Florence, Siena, San

Gimignano and Verona

The cost for the magic that **The DiVine Wine tours** offers to its guests, varies according to the standard of overnight accommodation required, to the duration of the tour; to the numbers of participants, to the region where the wine tour is focused etc; of course the bigger is the group, the lower the cost per person becomes;

Antonio used to photograph the wine world including famous producers like Antinori, Frescobaldi, Biondi-Santi, during his long career as a freelance journalist and photographer. With the advent of digital technology, the editorial photography market collapsed, so he decided to reinvent himself a new profession-; the wine-gastronomic tourism using his contacts with the producers.

He likes natural wines which contain almost no sulphites. In Italy, there has been a growing awareness, both from consumers, farmers and winemakers about the misguided use of chemistry in agriculture, and the problems it creates for consumers' health. It is difficult



with Sridevi Jasti from India

to produce good natural wines because the unpleasant volatility is often high. However, favoured by the climate, excellent **organic** and **bio-dynamic** wines are being produced by young enthusiastic producers in a few regions in Italy. He is very happy to organize trips to such wineries.

"I love wines which are the expression of a territory, sometimes the result of a passionate research on native vines that were believed to

have disappeared. Niche products that are still difficult to find in wine bars or restaurants of the international cities and must be tasted in their own production areas,' he says, adding, '**Etna** vines in **Sicily**, like **Nerello Cappuccio** and **Nerello Mascalese** practically disappeared, and rediscovered only twenty years ago, where the vines are raised as saplings in small terraces of a few square meters each, which climb up the sides of the Etna from 100 to 1.000 meters above sea level. The result is powerful wines that however express the salinity of the sea and the minerals that only the lava earth of this magical island can transmit to the vine.'



Barolo Langhe Piemonte

How about the fantastic **Pignolo** (red) or **Schioppettino** (white), rare autochthonous vines that the Leonardo da Vinci of Italian winemakers produce among the stones and sand of the **Isonzo** plain, near **Gorizia** in **Friuli** with zero sulphites: difficult to describe in words the aromas of exotic spices, which leave those who taste them stumped? Then there are **Nebbiolo** of the **Langhe**, and therefore of **Barolo** and **Barbaresco**, or of **Amarone** and **Recioto della Valpolicella**. You have to come to Italy to **The DiVine Wine Tours** to discover these wines in person.

Wines of Tuscany

Vines which have always existed and still serve, in small percentages, to soften the tannic **Sangiovese**, the princely vine of Tuscany, excellent for aging but a bit edgy and not easy to drink; from this grape, are used not only in the famous **Chianti** but also **Brunello di Montalcino**, **Nobile di Montepulciano** and **Morellino di Scansano**. A few winemakers might be a bit 'tired', not so much by Sangiovese, but by how it has been distorted in the past by

substituting it with **Merlot** and **Cabernet**, and by a massive use of barrique, to chase the taste of the international public (so much so that some Chianti tasted no different from the wines of Chile or Napa Valley). They decided to diversify their wines, experimenting with traditional indigenous vines of Tuscany, such as **Ciliegiolo**, **Canaiolo** or **Colorino**, which were used in the past to mellow down Sangiovese. They even started processing these single grapes by themselves, with

no blend, and made interesting wines expression of the territory with excellent results: fresh, lively, extremely vital wines, full of aromas, with a pleasant acidity and also with a good quality / price ratio; ideal wines for everyday use;



The Divine Wine tours in Tuscany Chianti

Antonio emphasizes that it is essential to visit in person the various Italian wine regions, to experience the many typical wines, without stopping at those already famous in the world. **The DiVine Wine Tours** can offer this experience to the guests.

Wine tours offering several benefits

Any wine tour is an experience full of emotions to discover different aspects of a new region. You get a deeper understanding and an emotional experience of the "culture" of the territory one visits. Culture is not only art, architecture or literature but also landscape, food, cuisine, wine of a specific region; Tuscany is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, because it represents a marvelous harmony between Man and Nature, where wine and cuisine play a very important role.

Furthermore, for a real wine lover, a wine tour is an educational tour. It is not possible to understand a wine just by drinking it thousands of miles away from where it has been produced. Tasting directly with producers, getting a feel of the love, passion and knowledge is a unique experience. You can also get a grasp of the French word "**terroir**" that alone can describe that synergistic synthesis between soil, climate, tradition, and work of man, personality of the producer and rules of production. Thus one can understand why in Tuscany the same one grape Sangiovese gives multiple diverse wines such as Chianti, Chianti Classico, Brunello di Montalcino or Nobile di Montepulciano, just a few kilometers away from each other.

During a wine tour, it is possible to discover the flavors of the regional Tuscan cuisine, simple because of origin, genuine and light as it is prepared with olive oil, the other typical product of Tuscany; but at the same time a refined, delicious cuisine, appreciated as one of the best in the world. Every year in Italy, there are millions of visitors of all nationalities, going on a cheerful pilgrimage from winery to winery, to discover, taste and buy wine and extra virgin olive oil.



Cinque Terre Liguria

Antonio stresses that **The DiVine Wine Tours** is not a tour operator, but a team of travel consultants, and wine lovers, specialized in wine and gourmet tours. 'I want to transmit the guests, the passion for the Italian wine world- a passion which constantly grew in me, during the last 17 years of non- stop tasting and scouting. Since 2002, I have been regularly attending all the main wine fairs, including **Vinitaly**, visiting hundreds of wineries all over Italy, from Piemonte to Sicily; not only to taste the wines but to understand the philosophy of wine makers,

to scout territory, restaurants, accommodations, in order to offer our clients high standard tours for a reasonable rate quality/cost. Believe me, the little money saved by organizing your own trip is not worth missing our experience, presence and assistance,' he adds.

His company doesn't take customers to visit mega wineries which produce millions of bottles, distributed worldwide, whose wines can be tasted in any big city and which keep the same boring standard taste, in order to match the palate of an international clientele.

For any further info, contact them directly at sferlaz@gmail.com or/and info@tuscan-italy-wine-tour.com or visit the website

www.tuscan-italy-wine-tour.com

Subhash Arora

delWine does not have any commercial dealings with the company and recommends them because of the experience, passion and knowledge of wines, especially Tuscan wines. You are welcome to compare their prices and terms-editor