

COMITATO GRANDI CRU D'ITALIA



Comitato Grandi Cru d'Italia was founded in 2005 to protect and promote the prestige of Italian winemakers who, for at least 20 years, have been producing high class wines that are widely acclaimed by wine critics and on the market. This was motivated by the absence in Italy of a law like the one in France, where classification of the «Grandi Cru» was established in law by Napoleon III on the occasion of the Paris Exposition of 1855.

In order to be eligible for inclusion among the Grandi Cru d'Italia, winemakers are selected on the basis of strict quality criteria, certified in the ratings assigned by the most authoritative wine guides and magazines, also taking into account the history and traditions of each one within the winemaking sector to ensure they have achieved a high degree of reliability in the production of top quality wines. The list includes the inner circle of the most prestigious winemakers in the country, representatives of the highest capacity of expression of the cultural and qualitative values of the territories with the most marked vocation for producing great wines.

The 10 promoting and founding members, at the apex of Italian oenology on the basis of the scrupulous integration of the leading Italian and international guides, have nominated additional founding members, and ordinary members. As an open list, both for entry and exit, the Comitato Grandi Cru d'Italia members are updated periodically by the association on the basis of the latest ratings, and on the request of producers themselves who, nevertheless, must satisfy all the necessary characteristics stipulated in the statute for admission: at least 20 years of production and achievement of the highest quality standards according to the most authoritative guides and magazines. Currently there are 100 wineries entitled to use the Grandi Cru d'Italia qualification.

This auction dedicated to the Grandi Cru d'Italia (part of the Committee that brings them together) shows Christie's specific interest in the best Italian wines, as it had already done with a previous special auction. Since then, indeed, Italian quality wines have been present in the numerous auctions organized during these years. Refocusing an auction only on the Grandi Cru d'Italia, though, is a clear sign of the great Auction House's competence and it confirms that the establishment of the Committee in 2005 is justified and based on the highest quality achieved from over 100 Italian wines.

The Conseil des Grands Crus Classés was founded by Emperor Napoleon III, in the occasion of the universal Expo taking place in Paris in 1855, on the basis of a very tangible factor: the best wines worthy to be classified were those with the highest price. Since in Italy there was not an emperor who could officially decide, we followed a more articulate and democratic path. We have crossed the ratings of Italian and foreign guidebooks of the wines that had been ranked with scores of highest level for at least 20 years. With this criteria, 120 wines emerged. 103 producers representing all the best territories accepted the invitation of the 10 promoters of the Committee, among them the first presidents of the association Piero Antinori and Vittorio Frescobaldi, followed by Carlo Guerrieri Gonzaga and Lucio Tasca d'Almerita. The Committee, unlike the French Conseil, is open both for the entry, if there are new producers who reach the required characteristics and for the exit, for those who can't maintain them.

The incumbent Chairman Tasca d'Almerita and Executive Deputy Chairman Paolo Panerai, on behalf of the entire Committee, thank Christie's for the attention paid to the Committee itself and for organizing this prestigious auction.