




WINE ENTHUSIAST

MAGAZINE

Circulation: 190,904

Date: December 31st, 2012





BY THE EDITORS OF
WINE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE

Each year since 2000, the editors of *Wine Enthusiast* honor those individuals who have contributed to the success of the wine and spirits industry with our Wine Star Awards.

New for 2012 is the addition of our Sommelier of the Year Award, which acknowledges the great contributions members of that profession make to our enjoyment of wine and spirits. A great sommelier bridges the realms of consumer and producer, bringing them together to serve both equally well.

As always, our winners are notable for their energy and groundbreaking vision, but this year another theme is apparent: family. Because of the long-term nature of the industry, family-owned concerns have always been the bedrock on which the wine business rests.

We're happy to add these individuals and businesses to our family of Wine Star Award winners. >>>



>>> **Arnaldo Caprai**



2012 EUROPEAN WINERY of the Year

...

The Caprai family has almost single-handedly revived Italy's Montefalco and its indigenous Sagrantino grape variety.

Call it Sagrantino indoctrination. Upon meeting Marco Caprai, the charismatic winemaker will likely engage in a subtle ritual that bonds you figuratively and literally to his personal dogma.

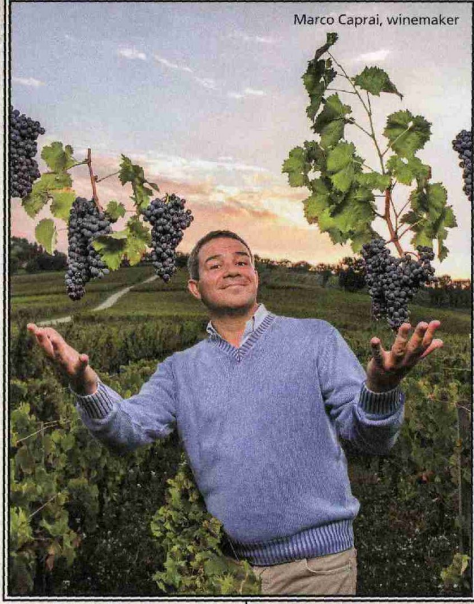
He produces a bracelet made of red string and asks for your arm. The crochet band represents Sagrantino di Montefalco, the wine that Caprai so successfully produces at the heart of Italy in Umbria. No matter what your mindset or purpose, you inevitably depart from his company with that emblematic bracelet knotted tightly to your wrist.

Of the country's many young, dynamic producers, perhaps no one is more representative of the new faces of Italian wine than 49-year-old Caprai.

One of three children of Arnaldo Caprai, after whom the estate is named, Marco majored in political science and maintains a passionate activist approach to all of his many endeavors. His proudest campaign yet has garnered Sagrantino (a little-known indigenous red grape from central Italy) worldwide attention.

"The motivation I feel comes from the demonstration that unknown grapes like Sagrantino can reach the highest levels of excellence, thanks to research and hard work," says Caprai, in his typically straight-shooting, matter-of-fact style.

Arnaldo Caprai founded one of Italy's leading textile companies in 1955. The man who identified so strongly with his native Umbria decided to buy vineyard land in 1971 and settled on the sleepy



hilltop hamlet of Montefalco.

There, he discovered the Sagrantino grape, which previously had been used to make sweet, sacramental wines. Marco joined the family wine venture in 1987 with remarkable vision for this unique and mysterious grape.

Caprai and Sagrantino share many similar qualities. The man is rebellious, left of center, feisty and focused. The grape is brooding, dark and nervous, with unruly tannins. Both are deeply rooted in the land they call home.

Just one year into his stewardship of the winery, Caprai launched the Sagrantino Project in partnership with the University of Milan to study the grape's clonal variation. He bought more land (bringing the total acreage to 375), built a state-of-the-art winery and planted various experimental vineyards.

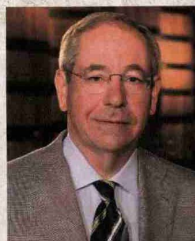
He's a leader in the Consorzio

Tutela Vini Montefalco, the regional winegrowers' association, and has been instrumental in establishing wine roads for visitors.

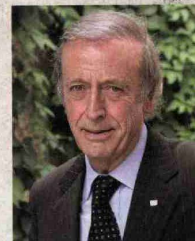
His latest mission is "Montefalco 2015: The New Green Revolution." Started in 2010, Caprai's goal is to produce a sustainable viticulture protocol, specific to his region and his indigenous grapes, which can be used as a model for others.

The protocol focuses on farming techniques, including biodynamic and organic methods. Caprai is also an active member of Symbola—the Foundation for Italian Quality, an important group of entrepreneurs dedicated to promoting Italian excellence.

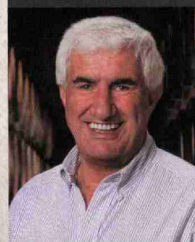
For all these lofty accomplishments, *Wine Enthusiast* is pleased to name Arnaldo Caprai our 2012 European Winery of the Year. —MONICA LARNER



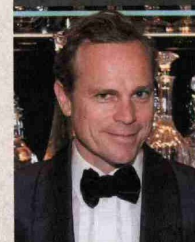
Wine Person of the Year
Joseph E. Gallo
E. & J. Gallo



Lifetime Achievement
Miguel A. Torres
Torres Group



Winemaker of the Year
Jorge Riccitelli
Bodega Norton



American Winery of the Year
Raymond Vineyards
Jean-Charles Boisset



**Brand Ambassador/
Mixologist of the Year**
Angus Winchester
Tangeray Gin



Sommelier of the Year
Michael Madrigale
*Bar Boulud, Épicerie Boulud
and Boulud Sud (NYC)*



**Master of
Ceremonies**
Adam Strum