

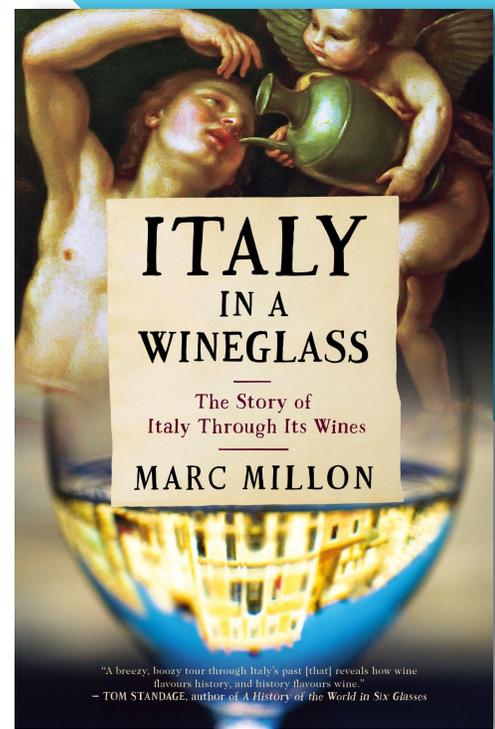
ITALY IN A WINEGLASS

The Story of Italy Through Its Wines

Marc Millon

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“*Italy in a Wineglass* gathers a multitude of small stories and anecdotes from which the enchantment of the richest land of vineyards arises. An excellent literary work, an innovative contribution to wine writing.” — **Sandro Boscaini, President of the Masi Agricola winery**

“It’s not often that a wine writer can engross and enthrall you with the history of a culture where wine merely plays its part along with many other players. Marc Millon does this absorbingly and impressively, telling the intriguing, exasperating, but ultimately optimistic story of Italy and its wines.” — **Oz Clarke, author of *The History of Wine in 100 Bottles***

SYNOPSIS

A leading travel writer and wine expert guides readers on a sumptuous journey through time and flavor to understand how and why wine transformed Italy . . .

From the ancient Greeks to the Medici, and from fascism to feminism, Italy has always been entwined with wine. Through the millennia, it has been a celebratory libation at great events, given solace in times of despair, and fortified warriors before battle. Whether Possessioni Rosso, still made by descendants of Dante; Barolo “Lazzarito,” from a wine estate founded by the son of Italy’s first king; or Terre Rosse di Giabbascio, pressed from grapes grown on ex-Mafia land, the peninsula’s wines provide an intoxicating insight into the ideas, events, and personalities that shaped Italian history.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How important was the role of wine to the ancient Greeks and what did it represent? How did the Romans influence wine production not just in Italy but across Europe? Can the great wines of today ever compare to the grands crus of the ancient world? And do any wines being produced today approach in style as well as quality the wines of the ancient world?
2. Which wines from the ancient world would you most like to try and why?
3. What are some of the traditions of wine making or wine drinking from the distant past that remain important today?
4. Without Christianity, could wine production have survived? Why were monks and monasteries so critical to furthering knowledge of viticulture and winemaking?
5. The *mezzadria* was a system of land tenure that survived for 800 years. It was only phased out as recently as the 1970s. Why did this system of sharecropping last for so long and what were the benefits for both parties? What are some of the positive changes that resulted following its demise?
6. What is *campanilismo* and how does this manifest itself in Italians’ approach to their enjoyment of local wine and food?

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7. What are examples of wines being influenced by trade or migration from other places?
8. About 60% of all Italian wines are produced in cooperative wineries. Some of these wines are today winning the highest awards and accolades. Additionally, many other sectors in Italy are based on cooperative ideals, from banking to retail, and across many agricultural sectors, making Italy one of the most cooperative countries in the world. Is there possibly something inherent in the Italian national character that makes this a country where cooperation is as valid and as important as competition?
9. How has the traditional role of women evolved since the 1970s and how is this reflected in the wine industry? Is enough being done to provide equal opportunities for women in the wine industry?
10. Climate change is clearly affecting wine and wine making, as record temperatures continue to be set and previously 'normal' patterns of weather have been disrupted, sometimes even turned on their head. How can wine producers adapt to climate change and what are some of the challenges that they will have to deal with in the immediate and coming decades?
11. Italy is at once one of the most ancient wine producing countries in the world, yet at the same time, one of the newest. What are some of the historic wine regions that have re-emerged in recent decades? Will more as yet little known areas emerge to be rediscovered in the coming years and decades?
12. Since man first mastered the art of making earthenware vessels capable of holding liquids, wine production has been linked to technology. What are some of the most important wine technologies that have transformed wine in recent decades?
13. Genetic editing, it seems, might be one way to help winegrowers deal with the increasing problem of fungal vine maladies such as downy mildew. How concerned should we be that such genetic technologies might be introduced into viticulture?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marc Millon has been travelling, eating, drinking, learning and writing about wine, food and travel for nearly 40 years. He writes for *Food & Travel Magazine* and is a certified Vinitaly International Academy Italian Wine Ambassador and regularly lectures and hosts gastronomic cultural tours in Italy, France and England with Martin Randall Travel. His regular weekly podcast, 'Wine, Food and Travel with Marc Millon,' on the Italian Wine Podcast channel regularly attracting several thousands of listens per show. When he is not on the road, he lives on the River Exe in Topsham, Devon, England.

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