

## Record-breaking 27th Merano WineFestival. Numbers and highlights of the most glamorous food & wine event in the world. Next edition 8-12 November 2019.

**Merano 16 November 2018** – Big celebrations for the 27th [Merano WineFestival](#), with 8.5% more visitors than the previous edition, and a series of events and new features that made this 2018 edition outstanding and extremely successful. Patron **Helmuth Köcher and his staff were proud to welcome the over 11 thousand visitors**, evenly distributed across the five days. The biggest turnouts were recorded on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. But there was also increased interest for **bio&dynamica** on Friday, featuring a selection of organic, biodynamic and PIWI (fungus resistant) wines, and on Tuesday with **Catwalk Champagne**, the cooking show by star chef **Karl Baumgartner** on the stage of Kursaal. While closing the doors of the most glamorous food and wine event of Italy and the world, WineHunter Helmuth Köcher invited everyone to come back next year on 8-12 November 2019. Another 12 months of wait, which will be dedicated to searching, discovering and carefully assessing quality wines and food.

In the elegant settings of Kurhaus, this year's edition showcased the **Official Selection**, featuring over 950 wine makers among the best in Italy and the world and over 120 taste experts. With **Rosé – Vino in Futuro**, the tasting session guided by sommelier Costantino Gabardi, the focus was on rosé wine and the path followed for presenting Italian style rosé wine through its most suited locations. Centre stage was also given to under 30 "Emergente Sala" professionals. After two days of intense tests, the best three professionals of Northern Italy were awarded the "Emergente Sala" award, conceived by Luigi Cremona and Lorenza Vitali. Merano WineFestival 2018 also set itself apart for the variety of extremely high level events dedicated to the food and wine sector, and the addition of musical entertainment and cultural meetings lasting well into the small hours, thanks to this year's new introduction, **The Circle – People, Lands, Experiences**, a series of "Fuori Festival" events in the enchanting settings of Piazza della Rena square, and which on Saturday hosted a show by **Joe Bastianich** called **Vino Veritas**, bringing together music and life tales, all accompanied by a good glass of wine. Another star was **Naturae&Purae**, the conference organised and run by Helmuth Köcher and Angelo Carrillo at the Gardens of Trauttmansdorff, with the participation of wine, fermented food and nutrition experts like Andrea Paternoster, Carlo Nesler, Mario Pojer, Gae Saccoccio and Dr. Lucio Lucchin, who demonstrated once again that wine can contribute to the wellbeing of mankind. Great interest also for **Wild Cooking**, dedicated to fermented food, with cooking shows and preparation of star-quality dishes. Undoubtedly, the highlight was the **WineHunter Platinum Award**, the maximum recognition awarded by **WineHunter Helmuth Köcher** in the **Wine, Wine Ante 2010, Culinaria (Culinary) and Aquavitae** categories, and through the **The WineHunter Award** guide, available for consultation free of charge at [award.winehunter.it](http://award.winehunter.it). Not just the presentation of food & wine excellences, but also open discussions, such as the **round table at the Puccini Theatre on the future of wine in view of climate change, new production opportunities and new expectations from the consumer**, attended by experts such as Stevie Kim, Luca Gardini, Luciano Ferraro, Oscar Farinetti, Joe Bastianich, Luigi Moio, Matilde Poggi, Walter Massa, Adua Villa, Luciano Pignataro and Andrea Gori, with host Franz Botrè and special guest Georg Kaser, climatologist from Merano, who invited everyone to a radical change in habits: "The world is being driven towards the worst of the two projections, with devastating effects on our lives, and specifically on wine growing. Even a temperature increase of just 1.5 degrees can have serious consequences on vine cultivation, the quality of wine, and much more", emphasised the professor.

To celebrate the **Campania** region, journalist Dante Stefano Del Vecchio was once again present with the sampling of wines of excellence. From Vesuvio to Campi Flegrei, Falerno del Massico to Asprinio di Anversa, Taurasi to the wines of Sannio, Irpinia, and again wines from the volcano and Cilento territory, as well as foods like pizza and the PDO Gragnano pasta, to the different types of tomatoes grown in the region. On showcase also some gastronomic interpretations by chefs Antonio Tubelli and Daniele Luongo, and the art of pizza making, included in the Intangible Cultural Heritage list of UNESCO, with the participation of Gino Sorbillo, Franco Pepe and Salvatore Salvo. Worthy of notice also **GourmetArena**, with its array of tasty dishes from all over Italy, and the very successful **Spirits Experience Area**, dedicated to the world of mixology, with **cocktail bars, tasting and themed seminars**. The Varnelli 150th Trophy Cocktail Competition also attracted many visitors: the Varnelli distillery celebrated 150 years of activity with a cocktail show featuring a representative group of new generation Italian bartenders.

Each day of the Merano WineFestival enjoyed live coverage of media partners such as **WineNews**, wine and food sector daily communication agency and one of the sites of reference for Italian food and wine, and **Cantina Social**, leader in wine sector digital transformation, with video and written content and live streams in two languages. **Radio Monte Carlo**, the official radio partner of Merano WineFestival 2018, covered the event with interviews to participants, experts and the public, broadcasted by Maurizio Di Maggio during his program *In viaggio con DiMaggio (travelling with DiMaggio)*.

**Link to the DIGITAL PRESS FOLDER:** <https://goo.gl/LxbVH4>. The press folder is updated daily and will shortly include the official photographs of the 27th edition #staytuned.

**Press Office:** [smstudio](mailto:smstudio) Stefania Mafalda M +39 345 5810157 [press@smstudiopress.it](mailto:press@smstudiopress.it)