



Press release

WINE IN AMPHORAS, THE RETURN OF CLAY FROM LEGACY OF THE PAST TO COMMERCIAL TREND, UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT AT SIMEI

(Milan, 16 November 2022). From the distant past of wine to a niche phenomenon projected into the future. Today it is the amphora, that ancient container for Bacchus' nectar, under the spotlight at SIMEI (organised by the Unione italiana vini and held at Fiera Milano until Friday 18 November) in the conference "Wine and amphoras: the return to clay", a focus that has retraced its history and investigated its prospects and commercial developments.

For the international editor of Gambero Rosso, Lorenzo Ruggeri: "Wines in amphoras are experiencing a moment of great experimentation. This phenomenon has a rosy future, in particular because it exploits horizontal communication involving on the one hand young producers, who are very interested in investigating the potential of this winemaking practice, and on the other young consumers, who respond with interest. A trend that we also observe journalistically: at Gambero Rosso we receive a new one to sample every week". And this development is also well observed in countries such as Portugal, as underlined by the producer Paulo Amaral (José Maria da Fonseca – Vinhos SA): "The production of Doc Alentejo in amphoras has grown more than seven times between 2014 and 2021, with good performance also in terms of exports".

"The amphora was not only the first container, but also one of the first marketing tools for wine, with the inscriptions that represented the merchant and the shape that revealed its origin," explained Attilio Scienza, university professor and one of the world's leading experts in viticulture. "The amphora – he continued – represents an icon, the image of a place or an object that is fixed in our memory and that transforms the landscape into a monumentum, activating a process of synaesthesia. Hence, the visual stimulus of the amphora is associated with the sensations of wine and the desire to repeat the taste experience, turning it into an aesthetic expression". A link with the territory also observed by the producer Elena Casadei, who for years has been investing and experimenting in this field: "The amphora represents the return to the land after processing in the cellar. A container that, like a loudspeaker, echoes the quality of the grapes we put in it". "The grape variety is crucial to determine the quality of the product – said the editor-in-chief of the publishing house Meininger, Robert Joseph – but we must remember that, despite the evocations that clay arouses, wines in amphoras are not necessarily organic or sustainable".

"The return to the amphora is today a novelty destined to develop and establish itself – concluded the Master of Wine Gabriele Gorelli –. But it should be remembered that, beyond marketing, this winemaking method does not in itself represent a guarantee of enjoyment or style. Producers will have to find ways to differentiate their labels by giving them a subjective and distinctive interpretation".