



from 15 to 17 October 2026 - Bergamo

DESPERATELY SEEKING... WINE SALES

Wine sells. Or so they say. At «Emozioni dal Mondo», the conversation turns once again to the future of wine, this time starting from the last step of the process: the sale.

Saturday, 17 October 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Sala delle Carrozze, Villa Carrara, Villa di Serio (Bergamo)

Does wine have a future? Two years ago, at «Emozioni dal Mondo», that was the question. And the answer, at the end of a round-table discussion that was anything but reassuring, came with a glimmer of hope: yes, wine does have a future.

In 2025, the focus shifted to the product itself: how wine is changing, how consumers are changing, what they expect from a bottle and, above all, what they are willing to choose.

In 2026, the perspective changes again.

This time, we're talking about sales.

Because we can produce the best wine in the world, tell its story in the most captivating way imaginable, bring consumers to the winery, take them among the vines and even invite them for an aperitivo at sunset. But sooner or later, the same question always comes up — far less poetic and much more down to earth: **does wine actually sell?**

And do consumers still drink wine? Do they buy it? Where do they buy it? When? Why do they choose one bottle over another? And what do they really expect from that bottle, from the moment they pick it up off the shelf to the moment they bring it to the table?

These are just some of the questions behind «**Desperately Seeking... Wine Sales**», the round-table discussion organised by the **Consorzio Tutela Valcalepio** as part of the **22nd International Wine Competition «Emozioni dal Mondo Merlot e Cabernet Insieme»**, taking place on **Saturday, 17 October, at 9:00 a.m. in the Sala delle Carrozze at Villa Carrara, Villa di Serio.**

This won't be a conference.

It won't be a masterclass.

It won't be a lecture.

It will be a conversation.

A conversation between wine professionals with different backgrounds, expertise and points of view. They won't be there to stick to a script, but to tackle a question that can no longer be ignored: **the wine crisis is no longer an early warning sign. It is a systemic issue.**

And if the problem is systemic, coming up with yet another buzzword won't be enough.

Two years ago, the closing round table at «Emozioni dal Mondo» opened with a Latin expression that was as evocative as it was unsettling: *Rari Nantes in Pelago Profundus*, “a few swimmers in a deep sea”. The discussion focused on “**The Wine of the Future or the Future of Wine?**”, exploring whether there was still a navigable course through those deep waters.

Today, the question has become more urgent and, perhaps, more uncomfortable.

It's no longer enough to ask what the wine of the future will look like. We need to understand whether we'll still be able to sell it.

“Two years ago, we were among the first to talk about the wine crisis. People looked at us askance and questioned whether the problem was even real. Two years later, everyone is talking about the wine crisis, but there is still a lack of courage when it comes to addressing it honestly,” explains **Sergio Cantoni**, winemaker and President of Vignaioli Bergamaschi, who will moderate the round table.



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“There's talk of wine tourism, low-alcohol wines, aperitivi in the vineyards... It's all smoke and mirrors. We're losing sight of what really matters. That's why we want to bring together professionals from different backgrounds and with different areas of expertise to discuss a situation that is there for everyone to see, and that we need to confront if we want the wine world to survive. The aim is to exchange views, assess the damage and look for possible solutions — above all, realistic ones.”

Joining Cantoni on stage will be **Valeria Quagiotto**, a consultant specialising in the development of wine brands in international markets; **Pietro Ghilardi**, CEO of Ghilardi Selezioni and a member of the Board of Directors of EXCELLENCE Srl – the Italian Association of Wine Distributors and Importers; **Manuel Marcotti**, a wine trade sales representative; **Beppe Damioli**, trainer and founder of Un Venditore Migliore® and Università della Vendita®; **Alberto Lupini**, chief director of *Italia a Tavola*; and **Marco Falconi**, sommelier and owner of Trattoria Falconi in Ponteranica (Bergamo). Different voices, different roles, different markets. Because tackling a systemic crisis means looking at it from more than one angle.

The goal is not to find someone to blame.

Nor is it to come up with yet another miracle cure.

It's about understanding what's happening and, above all, figuring out what can actually be done about it.

Because perhaps the problem isn't simply that consumers are drinking less wine. Perhaps wine is no longer managing to win them over. Or perhaps consumers can no longer find it. Maybe wine is being presented in ways that no longer speak to people. Or perhaps the wine world simply hasn't fully grasped just how much the world around it has changed.

These are hypotheses. The whole point of the round table is to put them on the table, debate them, challenge them where necessary and try to come up with some answers.

And this time, the audience won't just be there to listen: **it will be part of the conversation.**

At the end of the round table, the results of the **22nd International Wine Competition «Emozioni dal Mondo Merlot e Cabernet Insieme»** will be announced — the only competition in the world officially recognised by the OIV (International Organisation of Vine and Wine) for Merlot, Cabernet and their blends.

But the day won't end with the awards.

In the afternoon, also at Villa Carrara, the **Tinaia** will open its tasting counter to the public for free, offering the opportunity to sample the competition's award-winning wines. It will be a chance to taste Merlot and Cabernet wines that have travelled to Bergamo from every corner of the globe.

Alongside the award-winning wines from around the world, there will also be **«Emozioni di Valcalepio»**, dedicated to the historic wine appellation of Bergamo, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

Another opportunity to talk about wine, but this time with the people who make it every day. Producers of Valcalepio DOC and Terre del Colleoni DOC will share the story of the **2026 harvest**, their work in the vineyards, the decisions made in the cellar and, of course, their wines will be there to taste.

A day to talk about the future of wine. And, above all, to find out whether that future still has something to sell.

Because in the end, the question remains, simple and brutally concrete:

Wine for sale. But who's buying?