

Oltre 120 Anni della Famiglia Nonino



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FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA AFTER COVID, GIANNOLA NONINO:

“WE NEED CLEAR AND FAST MEASURES.

I’M IMPRESSED WITH THE IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE.”

Grappa Nonino Amaro Nonino Associazione Le donne del Vino del Friuli Venezia Giulia Movimento Turismo del Vino Friuli Venezia Giulia Friuli Venezia Giulia Turismo Zidarich Cantine Donnafugata Valentini Vini Famiglia Cotarella Cantina Antonelli Weingut Tenuta Alois Lageder Donatella Cinelli Colombini Biondi Santi Casale del Giglio Allegrini Marilisa Allegrini



For over a century the Nonino Company has been synonymous of quality grappa with an all-female management. Three generations of women led by a volcano of passion and

energy, Giannola Nonino. The entrepreneur tells us how they have faced this difficult period and what she reserves for the future.

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How did 2020 start for Nonino?

“For us 2020 started in an exceptional way, with great news, because we won the Wine Enthusiast Award as the best brand and distillery in the world. It was the first time in twenty years that the prestigious prize was awarded to an Italian distillery. For Benito and me, this award did not mean an arrival point, but a further recognition of what we had set out to achieve in the early 70s: the revolution of grappa from Cinderella to a queen of spirits. In San Francisco, to receive it, there were three generations of the Nonino Family: my daughter Elisabetta, my niece Francesca, Cristina's daughter, and I. Francesca represents the sixth generation of distillers and shows it with all her enthusiasm. There, on stage that night, I was really moved”.

And what happened with the coming of the emergency?

“Until the beginning of May - with the decisive support of exports - everything seemed to be going well, then the crisis began to bite. Especially in Italy, restaurants, bars, hotels, the Horeca world, were - and still are - in the most absolute uncertainty. The promised funds do not arrive or arrive partially and with great delay. The rules for the contagion change all the time. Prohibitions come and go. Italians doubt everything, hesitate, for fear of the future. We don't know how many companies will resist without a recovery in consumption, or will have to close. There's still no idea when the tourism industry will be able to get its head up again. The pandemic has affected the whole world, but we risk even worse economic effects”.

How do you face such a tough crisis?

“We feel the need for clear and unambiguous words, not brawls, with a coherent aid plan, with rapid implementation, but of long perspective. With lower taxes and fewer bureaucratic controls. Seeking agreement among political forces and not using the emergency to make a showdown at the expense of the country.

What has this forced stop caused to the industry?

“For over a century the Nonino has been the standard bearer of quality grappa, for which it has fought against everything and everyone. The whole world acknowledges the merit of this revolution, and this has certainly been useful for us in this crisis. We export more than 50% of our turnover to 78 countries, and so we successfully passed the first four months of the year. We took advantage of the opportunities offered by social events: live broadcasts, presentations, tastings and interviews - first of all - with Francesca and Cristina, as well as Antonella and Elisabetta. It would now be important for the national market to start up again, and that is why the government needs to move well and immediately, as other European countries have done. Until now we have managed to never stop, using all the tools to respect the rules”.

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What about the territory?

“Friuli Venezia Giulia was lucky because it moved well and on time. Governor Massimiliano Fedriga quickly took the necessary measures, many important decisions that were shared and supported also by the opposition. I find this a very important signal that should be taken as an example by everyone, first and foremost by our government. In cooperation with the trade associations, 33 million Euros in unsecured quick grants for small businesses were allocated, and we citizens also behaved seriously, respecting the rules for the common good. We Friulian people are a bit Hapsburg: on February 8th, at Trieste airport, all arriving passengers were already checked for fever”.

What remains of this emergency?

“On the one hand, I was particularly struck by the weight it had and has on young students. I saw it personally on my grand-daughters (two attending the third year of middle school and two attending the last year of high school): they live with great anguish and uncertainty this moment that was supposed to be the crowning achievement of their years of study, which they dreamed of living with their classmates with an end-of-year dinner, the school trip besides the unknown of a new school year looming without any security. On the other hand, we rediscovered the joy of being together with the family. Working is a duty - and for me a passion - but it is also essential to rediscover certain values of the past: solidarity between generations, love for well done things, attention to others, and respect for the environment. I wish the new generations, after this cataclysm, that the meaning of the word “Love” be rediscovered, which is what led Ermanno Olmi to award our 1987 Nonino Prize to the cover of Times magazine for the “respect for the Earth, the air, the man” with future generations in mind”.

And then what does the future hold for you?

“I hope to finally fulfill one of my greatest desires, which I have been carrying on for decades: to protect consumers and producers, it is essential to reintroduce - as was the case until the 1980s - “transparent” labels, i.e. with precise indications on the distillation method, the name of the distiller and, if it is not the same, the bottler. I hope that the Minister of Agriculture Mrs. Bellanova, who seems to love her work and knows how to distinguish fatigue from interest, will help us to complete this battle, certain that even the Guides of Repubblica - always very attentive to the respect for the territory and the consumer - will play a valuable role in this important battle”.

And by recounting the beauty and goodness of the country, the Guides of Repubblica try to contribute to the relaunch of territories and companies. The excellences of every corner of Italy are contained in our books available on Amazon, Ibs and on the store <https://ilmioabbonamento.gedi.it/iniziativa/guide>

waiting to return very soon to newsstands and bookstores with the new editions.

[Interview by Francesca Romaldo]

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