Consumer Countries/Markets

Thailand bans alcohol after King`s death

The Thai government has announced an indefinite ban on the public consumption of alcohol following the death of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who died last week after 70 years on the throne.

The government has declared a year-long period of mourning, calling for people to avoid “joyful events” for the next 30 days and asked visitors to the country to act respectfully.

As part of the declaration, local bars are refraining from playing music and dancing in nightclubs is prohibited.

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Global Trends - Wine Industry Key Elements

Cab is world´s most-planted red wine grape

Cab is genetic cross between cabernet franc and sauvignon blanc. It is characterized by small berries and very thick skin, which engenders tannin and character. Cab also possesses a remarkable ability to grow in almost any climate, from California’s sultry Central Valley, to Bordeaux’s storied left bank gravel, to exotic austerity of China’s Gobi Desert. Cab is world’s most-planted red wine grape.

Cab is the most popular red grape variety in the U.S. with some 16 percent of sales, topped only by its white rival, chardonnay, with 19 percent. It is an intriguing competition.

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Genomics Breakthrough Paves Way for Climate-Tolerant Wine Grape Varieties
A new sequencing technology, combined with a new computer algorithm that can yield detailed information about complex genomes of various organisms, has been used to produce a high-quality draft genome sequence of Cabernet Sauvignon, the world’s most popular red wine grape variety, reports a UC Davis genomics expert.

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Natural / Physical Resources

Wine and climate change: 8,000 years of adaptation

These days it is almost impossible to say anything moderately optimistic about climate change. But geographers, archaeologists, historians, agronomists and biologist can show some positive effects, because they allow for the immense creativity and resilience of human societies, and of living things in general, as demonstrated throughout the ages and across the great variety of different habitats on the planet. One of those positive effects could be the evolution of wine.

Wine-making is a branch of agriculture that arose from whim rather than necessity, as an expression of cultural identity. It has shown itself capable of adapting to the various climatic changes that have occurred in the last 8,000 years, since Vitis vinifera was first domesticated and disseminated. As a result, its methods – and the quality of the wine produced – never ceased to improve.

Inter alia
• Shipping delicate wines by means of long sea journeys also sparked ingenuity - the Dutch invented the sulfur stick that was burned to sterilise the barrels, the English began fortifying wines with spirits in order to stabilising wines containing a great deal of residual sugar post-fermentation and, along with the Flemish, invented thick black wine bottles made in coal-fired furnaces.
• Prolonging the ageing process with a cork made of a natural material discovered by the English in Portugal.
• The northernmost European vineyards, cold prevented the grapes from ripening properly often resulting in terribly sour wines. In addition, the final stages of fermentation were hindered by the arrival of the first cold front and would not resume until the following spring. These two problems eventually led to invention of the bubbles in Champagne, by adding sugar from the Caribbean to the very young wine and keeping it in tightly corked bottles, causing second fermentation and heavy carbonation.

The opposite phenomenon has now been occurring for some time. Rising temperatures – interspersed with climatic anomalies such as the late frosts that occurred across Europe last spring, devastating many vineyards – are having troubling effects.

New methods must be developed, and this is very much an on-going process.

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