



2011 AXA Millésimes Scholarship

Students in the Institute of Masters of Wine study programme are being offered unrivalled access to the winemaking teams across the AXA Millésimes' portfolio of properties through the company's annual scholarship.

AXA Millésimes, a long standing principal supporter of the Institute, contributes annually to its study programme around the world. The Institute encourages a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding wine and its study programme prepares candidates for the annual Masters of Wine Examination.

The scholarship, now in its third year, is open to students of the Institute at any stage of their studies towards achieving the title Master of Wine and in 2011 will include:

- Two to three days at AXA Millésimes' Bordeaux properties with, according to the season, tours of the châteaux estates, work in the vineyards and cellars, tastings and blending with the individual winemakers.
- Two days at either Mas Belles Eaux in the Languedoc or Domaine de l'Arlot in Burgundy.
- An optional visit to either Quinta do Noval in the Douro or Disznókő in Tokaj.

Selection will be by essay, written in either French or English and not exceeding 1,000 words, addressing the following topic:

"Biodynamics: a mere marketing tool or a fundamental transformation of viticultural practices?"

The deadline for essay submissions from Institute students is 29 July and the 2011 scholars will be announced in late August, ready for their visits in autumn 2011.

Lynne Sherriff MW, Chairman of the Institute, said: "This scholarship offers our students unrivalled insight to winemaking at leading properties. The experience is of enormous value to them and we are very grateful to AXA Millésimes for providing this learning opportunity."

Ends (06.07.11)

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The Institute of Masters of Wine

Master of Wine is internationally recognised as the foremost title in the world of wine. The qualification, established in 1953, is today held by professionals across the international wine community who have demonstrated both theoretical knowledge and practical ability in the art, science and business of wine and who are committed to professional excellence.

It is membership of the Institute of Masters of Wine and abiding by its Code of Conduct, not only passing the Masters of Wine Examination, which confers the right to use the title Master of Wine.

A Master of Wine is someone who has demonstrated, by way of rigorous examination, a thorough knowledge of all aspects of wine and an ability to communicate that knowledge clearly. They actively encourage others in the pursuit of knowledge as well as seeking to bring wine communities together.

The Institute's vision is one of knowledge and integrity. Through its members – the international community of 289 Masters of Wine – and its activities, it promotes excellence, interaction and learning, across all sectors of the global wine community.

In keeping with its original aims, the Institute promotes a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding wine at the highest level. It also organises and contributes to wine trade events around the world. Annual visits are made to wine producing regions whilst the Institute's annual tasting and master class programme provides an independent and authoritative perspective on wine. Every four years, its international symposium brings together leading figures from the wine community to address topical issues in an independent forum.

For more information on the Institute see its www.mastersofwine.org website.

AXA Millésimes

AXA Millésimes, a subsidiary of the French insurance group AXA, was established in the mid-1980s when Claude Bébéar, President of AXA at the time, and a great lover of fine wines, wished to create the “wine arm” of the company. The aim was to invest in wine properties which had a potential for making great wines. The first purchase, in 1987, consisted of two properties in Pauillac, Château Pichon-Longueville and Château Pibran as well as one property in Burgundy, Domaine de l'Arlot. Important investments, both in the vineyards and in the cellars, were carried out in the years following these purchases.

Then succeeded a string of other acquisitions in Bordeaux: Château Petit-Village in Pomerol (1989) and Château Suduiraut in Sauternes (1992). The same year as the latter, following the fall of communism in the eastern bloc, AXA Millésimes was able to acquire the historic vineyard of Disznókő in Tokaj.

In 1993, Quinta do Noval was purchased and Christian Seely was appointed Managing Director. At the end of 2000 Christian Seely was appointed Managing Director of AXA Millésimes in Bordeaux, thus leaving Portugal but not his management functions at Quinta do Noval. In 2001, AXA Millésimes purchased Château Tour Pibran, the neighbouring property of Château Pibran, thus enlarging the surface of the property from 10 to 17 hectares. Finally, in December 2002, a brand new acquisition, Mas Belles Eaux in the Languedoc area, was completed by Christian Seely and his technical team.