

The Sommerlier

Creating an international community of water-sommeliers

Association de la Sommellerie Internationale

- Formed in 1969 in Reims
- Organizes national sommelier-organizations
- Only one member-organization per country
- Membership is awarded after 3 year trial period

Tasks of ASI

1. Organize national sommelier-associations in an international network and promote creation of sommelier-associations in countries where they dont exist
2. Coordinate activities which promote professional skills for sommeliers, set standards, arrange competitions etc.
3. Defend ethical standards of the profession

Organization

- One General secretary, a renown sommelier
- Technical Committee, setting professional standards, organizing events and competitions etc
- Commercial Committee, collecting sponsor-financing and allocating collected funds to events etc

Financing

- National associations pay membership fee to ASI (1500-4500 Euro/year)
- Beyond this, activities are sponsored by industrial brands like Pellegrino, Carlsberg, Vinexpo etc.
- This way the big brands indirectly contribute to maintain the small

Technical Committee

- Appointed by general assembly
- Members are top-sommeliers
- Establishes curriculum and questions for international competitions:
 - Blind tastings (practical)
 - Wine etiquette and pairing (practical)
 - Knowledge (written exam with questions about production methods, history, districts, brands etc).

Why is it time to create a similar set-up for Water Sommeliers?

- Easier, while the profession is in its infancy
- Crucial for maintaining balance between premium and fine waters
- While unifying the high and low end of the premium segment

Where we are?

- Germany - Interested in International umbrella-organization
- Italy – Interested in International umbrella-organization
- Korea – no contact yet
- China
- Other?

What to do

1.

Representatives from existing national organizations should meet to form "International Water Sommelier organization".

I will organize this.

2.

Only a few countries have watersommeliers today.

New national organizations must be formed.

You can all contribute to this.

3.

Finewaters.com should be expanded with a water-sommelier section

Michael Mascha will do this

Annual Events

- Events should be designed to optimize media coverage for brands and sommeliers
- 100% Sponsored
- Competitions designed to stimulate
 - * creation of taxonomy for describing water,
 - * celebrate diversity and stories of waters
 - * focus on pairing of water, wine, and food

Examples of competition-themes reinforcing our noble objectives

- * Describe 3 waters in max 20 words per product – a panel has to recognize the three based on your description.
- * Blind tasting of characteristic water-types (estimate the TDS or the carbonization for instance)
- * Knowledge quizz about brands (origin, history, mineral composition etc).
- * Pair difficult foods or beverages with waters and explain what and why