

House Of The Unconventional

An Interview with Alessandro Pasqua, President, Pasqua USA LLC

EDITORS' NOTE *Forty-year-old Alessandro Pasqua is President of Pasqua USA. He has been in charge of Sales and Marketing for the North American market and Canada since 2016. Pasqua previously gained experience at Bain & Company in projects in Italy and Japan.*



Alessandro Pasqua

WINERY BRIEF *Pasqua Wines (pasqua.it) is a historic Veronese winery, owned by the Pasqua family. Founded in 1925, the winery is recognized worldwide as a producer and ambassador of prestigious Veneto wines. The company's ambition is to take the winemaking experience it has gained over 100 years of history into the future with renewed stylistic codes. This is possible by combining its century of experience and deep understanding of the potential of the Valpolicella terroir with innovation in wine-making style.*

Will you discuss the history of Pasqua Wines?

Pasqua Wines was founded in 1925 in Verona by my grandfather and his brothers. Originally, they were making wines in Southeast Italy, but in 1955 the winery was officially founded. Recognizing the tremendous potential of the Veneto region, my grandfather and his brothers had the foresight to establish their winery there. In the 1940s, our family pioneered the development of an automatic bottling system, revolutionizing production and contributing significantly to our growth in the region. The foresight of my grandfather and his brothers was to go to an up-and-coming wine region like Veneto because the potential was huge. In the 1940s, when my family became the first to come up with an automatic bottling system for the wines, it helped with production immensely, growing the business in the region. As of today, the winery is still run by my family. My father, Umberto, is the President, my brother, Riccardo, is the CEO, and I am the President of Pasqua USA – three generations of passionate winemakers. Pasqua Wines are distributed in many countries around the world, and we are proud to have just received the *Wine Enthusiast's* Innovators of the Year Award.

Will you provide an overview of Pasqua's winery and wines?

Pasqua is located in Italy's Veneto region, nestled in the heart of Verona. We are recognized worldwide as a producer of prestigious Venetian wines, and we are committed to innovation in the vineyards and wine-making, which is why we came up with our tagline, "Pasqua: House of the Unconventional." We like to challenge ourselves with unconventional projects. Pasqua Wines is leading the way in quality and innovative wine-

making with icons such as 11 Minutes Rosé, Hey French! You Could Have Made This But You Didn't, and the Mai Dire Mai line. 11 Minutes Rosé is a rare, if not unique, blend created from two grapes native to Veneto, Corvina and Trebbiano di Lugana, and two international varieties, Syrah and Carmenere. Hey French You Could Have Made This but You Didn't can be considered our bravest and boldest creation, as it's made from four different vintages and aims at embodying the terroir

identity and the winery's style which emerges beyond the single vintage. Finally, the iconic Mai Dire Mai line conveys the excellence of the Valpolicella wine region, representing our most powerful and radical expression among the different interpretations of Valpolicella wines we produce.



Pasqua barrel room



Pasqua Winery

What have been the keys to Pasqua's industry leadership?

The key to Pasqua's industry leadership is our commitment to innovation in grape growing and winemaking. With a long history behind us dating back to 1925, we have always embraced innovation as a key element first in the vineyard, then in the cellar, and, finally, within wine communication. We are deeply rooted in the territory and strongly projected into the future. For us, winemaking is deeply intertwined with wine-reinventing and this has become even more important with the third generation, which is now leading the winery. The company's ambition is to bring all our grape growing and winemaking experience, which we have developed over a century, into the future through renewed stylistic codes in order to honor the interests of the consumers, especially when it comes to the next generation. This is why we have also presented the "Pasqua: House of the Unconventional" Manifesto which describes our vision to be a research laboratory and a creative hub. The aim is to combine our century-old experience and full understanding of the potential of the Valpolicella terroir with innovation in wine-making style and communication strategies.

Will you provide an overview of Pasqua USA?

Pasqua USA is a project that started with my brother, Riccardo, back in 2010 and has continued with me taking over in 2016. Since then I have been in charge of sales and marketing in North America for Pasqua Wines where I coordinate a team of dedicated professionals with expansive knowledge of the market. Each year, we try our best to be innovative and break glass ceilings by doing things never done before. For example, Pasqua Wines is the first Italian winery ever to be nominated and win *Wine Enthusiast's* Innovator of the Year Wine Star Award. That is something we would not have been able to achieve without the success of the North American market.

What have been the keys to Pasqua Wines growth in the North American market?

The key to our growth in the North American market is, first of all, the quality we are offering and the innovation we are bringing, which starts from the vineyards and goes all the way up to our tone of voice and communication. We also have a young team with strong vertical sales experience that allows us to have a stronger presence in the market and to target the right audience. Consumers looking for something valuable come to us because they know they can have a great sensory and esthetic experience, and this has been particularly true with the younger generations, Millennials and Gen Z. Some research we have conducted with Toluna, a market research company, confirms the direction

of our strategy where creativity and innovation from the vineyard to the winery to communication are central. Both profiles show a growing attention for the world of wine and its denominations and confirm to us how Italy is one of the reference countries of the global wine culture, able to attract the consumers of the future with its many diverse wines and stories.

Will you highlight Pasqua Wines study on the relation between wine, Millennials and Gen Z, and how to make wine more relatable to younger generations?

Millennials and Gen Z have very different buying habits from their parents. In order to explore these consumers, early last year we partnered with Toluna to investigate these two categories in three different markets: Italy, the U.S., and U.K., interviewing over 800 people in each country. The results have highlighted how sustainability is a crucial value for both these groups when buying wine, with Gen Z paying huge attention also to inclusion. Gen Z is also very keen on the intersection between art, digital art, and products they buy. They want the wine to be relevant to their other interests. Also, young generations look for brands which they can trust and which are able to offer quality and innovation. By Pasqua Wines focusing on art and sustainability, we make the wine more approachable to the younger generation.

Where did your passion for the wine business develop?

Pasqua Wines has been in my family for generations. I grew up around wine and the business, and over time, they became second nature to me. I am inspired every day by my family's commitment to wine and innovation. We are constantly learning how to navigate new challenges and embrace new opportunities. In a way, I suppose I have always had a passion for it. ●



Pasqua vineyards in Italy