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 tastingpanel  
 MAGAZINE

MODERN  
 MOONSHINERS

INTRODUCING  
 OLE SMOKY MOONSHINE'S  
 NEWEST BRAND  
 AMBASSADORS



**OLE SMOKY'S MASTERS OF MOONSHINE** convened at the edge of the Great Smoky Mountains in May to immerse themselves in the history and culture of the Tennessee-based brand. Pictured clockwise from right are Carlos Ruiz, Kenny Strong, Madeline Bishop, and Ginny Edwards, Ole Smoky's first crop of Brand Ambassadors.

ITALIAN WINE CENTRAL  
CO-FOUNDER/EDUCATION  
DIRECTOR

# Geralyn Brostrom

by Michelle Metter



**G**eralyn Brostrom is the co-founder and Education Director of Italian Wine Central (IWC), an online resource and provider of the Italian Wine Professional certification. Brostrom also serves on the Board of Advisors for SommCon and will be leading talks on Italian wine at SommCon Washington, D.C. this month and SommCon San Diego in November.

**As an educator, what role do you feel technology plays in the way wine professionals learn today?**

I see technology interwoven every day, from students taking classes online to them accessing information from around the world to inform their studies and their work. That said, the human element still reigns supreme and wine is a great medium

for the old and the new to exist side by side. People long to taste together even if one student is in Rome and the other in Nashville.

**How do you think technology shapes the way sommeliers interact with and make recommendations for their customers?**

Platforms such as SevenFifty and the multitude of apps that aggregate data—both regarding product availability as well as consumer-preference side—can help somms be more efficient and have informed conversations with customers.

**Why did you choose a career in education?**

I've always gotten a thrill from helping others learn and seeing that look in their eyes when they ultimately "get it." I like breaking down complex ideas and sorting through mountains of information, reorganizing it, and presenting it in an understandable way. That's also the way I learn.

**Who do you see taking part in the certificate study for the Italian Wine Professional credential you offer?**

Mainly working professionals who need more Italian wine knowledge to be successful and credible in their jobs. Second to that are serious enthusiasts.

**Why Italy as the cornerstone of the education you offer?**

Three reasons: First, explaining to others the sheer diversity that Italy has to offer makes it a natural fit for my intellectual side. Second, I had been working with Italian wine in earnest since 2002 and when I went out on my own, my colleagues kept asking for it! And third, as an Italian citizen, all things Italy feel like a second skin to me.

**What is a common misperception about Italian wine you wish people would forget?**

That Italian wine is just too complicated to learn—it is complex, but completely manageable.

**Where do you think the growth opportunities are for educators in the industry?**

I would say there is a huge opportunity for people who are educated about wine in buying, selling, and marketing, especially in brand management. Brand managers who know their product and how it fits into the product landscape, who can also communicate that in an effective and memorable way, will find lots of opportunity.

**If you were to give a book out of your library to a fellow wine professional, what would it be?**

A book on humor—I am fascinated by the study of humor. We simply don't laugh enough.

**You have five minutes and one glass of wine. Who are you with, what are you drinking, and what's playing?**

My husband, Rosato, and Ella Fitzgerald. ■

The Tasting Panel and The SOMM Journal are proud to serve as the media sponsors of SommCon D.C. (July 22–24) and SommCon San Diego (November 14–16). For schedule and registration details, visit [sommconusa.com](http://sommconusa.com).