



ndrea Illy holds a spoonful of dark liquid to his lips and slurps it in one quick shot. A moment later, after a ritual spitting, he notes, "It's the *terroir* that makes a difference in what is expressed." Illy, 51, the high-octane president of Illycaffè, is explaining

the nuances of coffee aromas and chemistry in the testing laboratory at the company's roasting plant and corporate headquarters in Trieste, Italy. With focused intensity, he examines each of the nine arabica coffee components in Illy's signature single blend.

Local climate and soils, shade from plants, and varying altitudes influence the beans and the final product—from the intense cocoa and slightly bitter flavors of Brazilian arabica to its aromatic Ethiopian counterpart.

"We get more linalool from Costa Rica," Illy says of the natural

compound responsible for jasmine aromas, which, he adds, is also used in Chanel No. 5.

That icon of fragrance and fashion proves a fitting comparison to the world's top highend coffee brand. In the past 30 years, Andrea and his older brothers, Riccardo and Francesco, have established the coffee roasting company founded by their grandfather as a fixture of the world's taste elite and have spread it as a symbol of Italian style in 140 countries.

Illy's single blend has become a gold standard in high-end restaurants and five-star hotels around the world. It is produced to embody an ideal that has been refined over decades: smooth, aromatic and complex espresso with minimal acidity and bitterness.

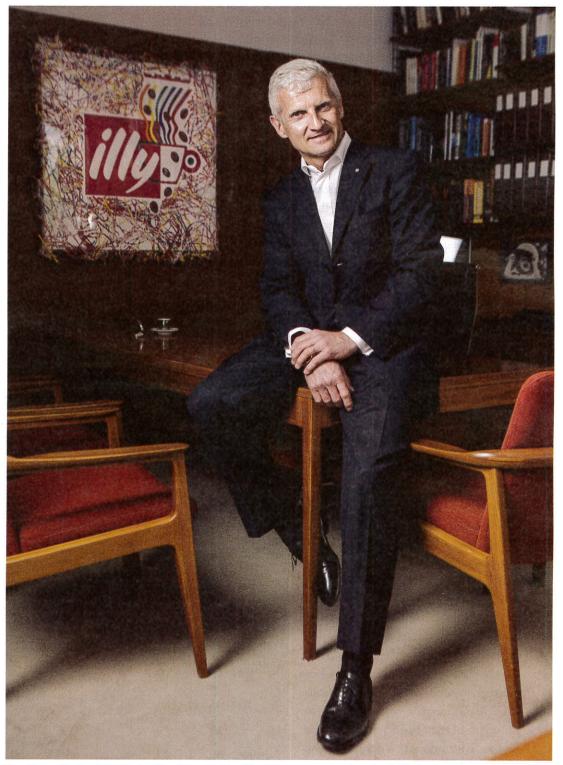
In the booming specialty coffee market of the United States, Illy occupies a singular niche at the top end of Italian imports. Its revenue of half-a-billion dollars is only a third that of Italy's leading coffee brand, Lavazza, and Illy is tiny compared with American multibillion-dollar giants Keurig Green Mountain and Starbucks. But it casts a much larger shadow than its size would suggest.

"It's the most luxurious of all coffee brands out there," says chef-partner Tony Mantuano of Chicago's Spiaggia restaurant, long considered the city's top Italian dining destination. A Wine Spectator Best of Award of Excellence winner, Spiaggia recently added an elegant Illy-designed coffee room after decades of running an all-Illy coffee program. "It's not one thing. The whole experience is beautiful. I would never ever open a restaurant and not serve Illy."

With its multifaceted approach, the company has distinguished itself by shaping international coffee culture at every level, honing its image for excellence with impeccable, artist-designed espresso cups;

vibrant, colorful coffee machines; and 200 sleek, franchised cafés from Dubai to San Francisco.

Below the surface, the company's wide-ranging initiatives include its University of Coffee, which, with 20 worldwide branches, schools growers in best practices for quality and sustainability, trains baristas and coffee lovers in the fine art of espresso, conducts research on coffee genetics and collaborates with the Oxford University Centre for the Environment to research the effects of climate change on coffee growing.



Illycaffè president and CEO Andrea Illy, pictured in his office at the company headquarters in Trieste, is credited with refining the science of the brand's coffee, expanding Illy's education initiatives and building a highly recognizable brand.

And Illy isn't stopping there. With an eye to the future, the brand has in the past decade extended its reach to other epicurean luxuries, from superpremium chocolate in Italy's Piedmont region to teas in Paris to wine in Montalcino. The company's purchase of the Mastrojanni estate, near Montalcino, in 2008 represented its first foray into wine—part of what the company says is a long-term strategy to bring elite appellation wines under the family umbrella.

In his Trieste office, where edgy modern art shares wall space with oil portraits

of Illy patriarchs, Riccardo Illy, 60, president of Illycaffè's parent company, Gruppo Illy, speaks to the ever-increasing standards of modern consumers. "They will demand two things: quality and healthiness in what they eat and drink. Those two things go hand in hand in wine."

A Family Affair

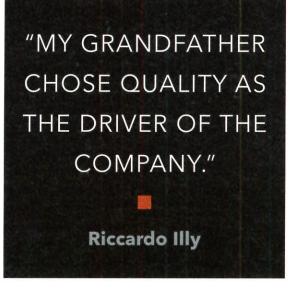
he Illy brothers dress simply, take their lunches in the company cafeteria and run their large family business like a much smaller one. They make key decisions together—often consulting their mother, Anna, who at 84 still shows up for work on the executive floor.

Bound by a family work ethic, they show no signs of being the proverbial third generation that blows grandpa's fortune. In fact, they have increased sales exponentially, from the equivalent of 20 million euros in 1977, the year when Riccardo came on board,

to 429.5 million euros in 2014, according to the company's annual report.

The company's winning formula is a rare mix of talents—in business, scientific innovation and style—embodied by the three brothers, Riccardo, Andrea and Francesco. Their sister, Anna, 57, holds no official executive leadership role but works in Brazil as a liaison with growers in Illy's largest coffee production area.

Riccardo is the big-picture leader of the Gruppo Illy holding company. A former ski instructor who now favors dark blazers and felt Borsalino hats, he is a disciplined executive who seems to gauge everything carefully—right down to his espresso limit of three shots per day. In a sideline political career that spanned 15 years before ending in 2008, including two terms as Trieste's mayor and another as president of the Friuli–Venezia-Giulia region, Riccardo was a reformer who streamlined local bureaucracies and supported entrepreneurism.



Andrea looks like a younger version of Riccardo, with the family's characteristic clear, blue eyes and aquiline nose. He is an avid sportsman and a self-proclaimed "humanitarian chemist." The CEO of Illycaffè since Riccardo was appointed mayor of Trieste in 1994, Andrea has sharpened Illy's leadership in coffee science, ecology, education and global branding.

Francesco, 62, the family *artista*, is a photographer and creative-idea man with a gray ponytail, a scruffy beard and rumpled suits. He has helped link Illy to the

worlds of art and wine and is president of Mastrojanni.

The three brothers represent a mix of talent and temperament: "Francesco is totally emotional and artistic. Riccardo is completely rational. Andrea is in between," their mother says. But they share an obsessive attention to detail in anything bearing their name.

In the Can

lly's philosophy is embodied in a single utilitarian object: the company's cylindrical steel canister. From the container itself to the blend inside to the modern logo painted by American pop artist James Rosenquist, the can is emblematic of Illy.

In 1934, grandfather Francesco Illy patented the family's defining invention—a system for canning roasted coffee beans with inert nitrogen. An enterprising Hungarian, Illy immigrated to Italy after World War I. Trieste was then a vital port city serving coffeeloving Vienna and middle Europe. Most coffee beans in Europe at

the time shipped raw to local roasters. Illy's innovation opened the roastedbean market to export and expansion.

Francesco Illy found an investor in his larger competitor Hausbrandt, and the partnership shipped coffee across Italy and Europe at large. In order to justify the costs of canning and shipping, Illy carefully selected and roasted his beans.

"My grandfather chose quality as the driver of the company from the start," Riccardo says.

Francesco Illy's next invention is considered the precursor to the modern espresso machine. Until this time, espresso machines ran on steam, which forced boiling water through coffee grounds—resulting in a bitter, burned taste. His Illetta machine replaced the steam with compressed air and allowed the use of slightly cooler water for an extraction that was ultimately smoother.

Illy also began making chocolate and bought a farm in the Istrian countryside. But World War II interrupted his



Hungarian-born company founder Francesco IIIy invented the predecessor to the modern espresso machine in the 1930s.

dreams. The disappearance of raw materials was followed by a bitter occupation of Trieste and an aftermath in which the family farm was annexed as part of the new Yugoslavia.

La Dolce Vita

uring the postwar decades, Italian industry and fashion experienced a boom, and espresso played a leading role in the lifestyle of the day. "Espresso became part of the Italian way of life," Riccardo says. "It was a kind of elixir—a product that gave Italians a sense of a small luxury."

Ernesto Illy joined the company in 1947, taking it over in 1956, after the death of his father. In the years that followed, he gained a controlling interest from Hausbrandt and set out to modernize the company, laying the foundation for its future.

A chemist by training, Ernesto built the Illy plant outside Trieste and filled it with technological innovations: He adapted optical sorting machines to scrutinize coffee beans for defects, mechanized the sealing of Illy's now famous cans and developed chemical analytics in the company's first testing labs. At international conferences, he boasted that Illy had identified the chemical profile for coffee quality.

Today the plant's four giant industrial roasters produce all of Illy's coffee. Here, before the Illys buy any lot of beans, they roast a small sample in the lab, followed by a tasting with what Riccardo wryly calls "the human instrument."

When Ernesto's son Riccardo joined the company at 22 years of age, he was already married to Rossana Bettini (now an instructor of sommeliers in Italy) and was enrolled in business-related courses at the local university. Illy was still a coffee wholesaler then, and Riccardo went to work reorganizing the company's Italian sales force while reporting to his mother, then the company's commercial director.

But something bothered him. Illy boldly promoted its coffee to bar and restaurant owners as "the best." Yet it sold several different qualities of beans at different price points—reserving its top *specialità* blend for its best customers.

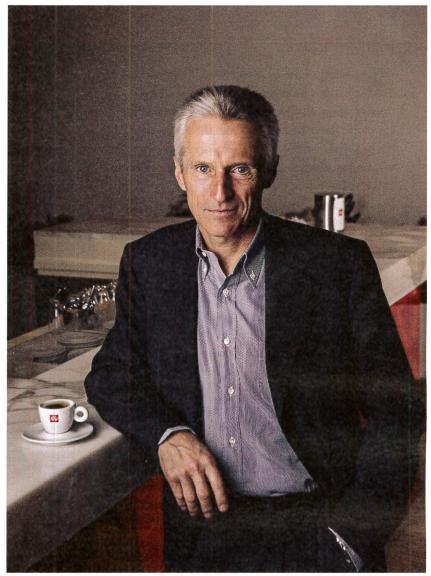
"The other bars were complaining, and they came to the company asking for the same blend," Riccardo recalls. "I thought, 'Why should a customer buy coffee from us at hundreds of kilometers away?" And the answer was, because we offer the best. And the best can be only one."

Riccardo proposed that the company offer one single Illy blend—the best they had—and drop the others. Ernesto agreed, but the conversion was messy. Some businesses complained about losing exclusivity; others refused to pay the higher price. But in the long run, the switch caused Illy to gain more customers than it lost.

"Riccardo was tough enough to find a way to organize the company around one blend," says his mother. "He said, 'I know this is right, and this is how it will run.'"

Arabica

n the 1980s, Illy moved into retail sales and began exporting beans to the United States, rushing to fill the needs of the newly minted owners of the first generations of home espresso machines. America was still years away from making household



Gruppo IIIy president Riccardo IIIy, who decided to offer a single top-quality roast rather than a range of options, has helped crystallize the brand's reputation for excellence.

words of "espresso" and "cappuccino," but in Italy, the competition grew intense.

Riccardo and Andrea looked for a way to burnish the company's image as a purveyor of high quality and decided to focus on one bean species: arabica, purchased directly from coffee growers at premium prices. "We felt the need to really differentiate ourselves," says Riccardo.

Espresso is typically a blend of aromatic arabica and (less-expensive) robusta beans. Arabica cultivars, though lower yielding and more difficult to grow, are considered superior to other varieties because they produce smoother and more complex coffee with less caffeine. Robusta, which in the U.S. dominates inexpensive instant coffees, is easier to grow but is typically bitter. In espresso, some roasters skillfully use robusta to add a throat-tingling edge, but its major advantage is ease of use for reliably producing a thick crema, the essential creamy head that tops an espresso.

"Espresso is the quintessence of coffee, but it is horribly difficult to prepare," says Andrea, who has studied 13 variables in espresso making, from water temperature and pressure to the fineness and packing of the grinds to ambient humidity.

"Coffee has 1,000 aromas—the same amount as wine," Andrea says. But because espresso is prepared on the spot by humans, the Illys decided there were two ways to ensure that the quality they sought emerged in the cup: "We had to either train the best baristas or offer the single-portion system." In the end, they did both.

Pod Wars

eginning in the 1970s, Ernesto Illy was obsessed with what he saw as the future—predosed portions of ground coffee for espresso, wrapped in filter paper. He licensed a patent from the American coffee pioneer Cyrus Melikian, an inventor of coffee vending machines, and began adapting the concept to special automatic espresso machines.

In the 1980s, Riccardo led the conversion of these pods into foolproof single doses for home espresso machines. Soon after, Swiss-based Nestlé launched its aluminum Nespresso capsule.

Nestlé's size and marketing power posed a daunting challenge. To determine a plan of action, Riccardo looked to the pages of home video history, in which IVC's open, collective VHS format had beaten Sony's proprietary Betamax. In 1989, Illy designed an open system of espresso capsules called the ESE ("easy serving espresso") pod, and in 1998, the company formed a consortium dedicated to using this system, with members including Lavazza and Starbucks.

But over time, the consortium proved no match for Nespresso, which is now the leading player in the global market for single-dose coffee capsules, estimated by Illy to be worth \$13 billion. Just about every major coffee brand now offers its own version; in the U.S., Keurig Green Mountain is the category leader. In 2007, Illy introduced its own proprietary plastic Iperespresso capsules for a line of colorful, retro-style machines.

Today Illy says it produces less than one half of 1 percent of the world's roasted coffee and capsules. Yet Andrea insists that Illy is right where it wants to be: defining itself at the high end of the industry. "We want to be building quality," he says, "not quantity."

Deconstructing the Blend

Ily is an oxymoron," says Andrea. "It is a very big company to be putting such care and obsession into

In the coffee world today, high quality roasters are booming. In the U.S., the world's largest coffee market, the revolution was once defined by the spread of Starbucks. Now dozens of "third wave" local craft roasters are moving into the elite tier.

The U.S., Illy's second-biggest market, accounts for less than a sixth of company revenues, according to Illycaffe North America yet the brand occupies its own Italian perch here.

"Illy has a limited space in the market that it occupies very

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BONUS VIDEO Brunello Beauties: Join Riccardo Illy of Mastrojanni to explore the differences between a Brunello blended from a few vinevards and a singlevineyard wine. Watch him at www.winespectator.com/103115





Top: Tasters in the IIIy laboratory select green coffee beans for sampling. Above: After the beans are roasted, team members taste, or cup, the samples as part of the company's quality-assurance process.

consistently and very well," says Berkeley, Calif.,-based coffee writer Kenneth Davids, who has chronicled the American gourmet coffee scene for more than 40 years.

"Illy espresso is very delicate, clean and balanced. It's very refined as a standalone espresso," Davids says, "but it's so refined it can be nonarresting. It tends to disappear in any quantity of milk."

With the influence of Starbucks and its creamy latte combinations, many Americans have become accustomed to espresso with milk and other flavors. Andrea Illy predicts that as coffee moves "from specialty to excellence," more Americans will drink espresso "in its purest state." And if that happens, Illy stands to benefit.

For many restaurateurs, Illy sets the standard for Italian espresso. "There is a certain set of flavors—a roundness, sweetness, fruitiness and smoothness—that you don't get with other coffees," says



chef Paul Bartolotta, who began drinking espresso during the 1980s, when he was cooking in Italy, and who now runs Bartolotta Ristorante di Mare, at Wynn Las Vegas. "It doesn't need sugar or milk because it's so consistently balanced."

One of the hallmarks of coffee today, seen in microroasters and Nespresso alike, is variety, from the style of roast to the single-origin "crus" of specific plantations.

In contrast, Illy has kept its focus on a single blend made with nine arabica selections from 40 different growing areas. This is what the company uses for its medium roast, dark roast and decaffeinated coffees, and in products including whole beans, capsules and the Illy Issimo canned drinks produced with Coca-Cola. In a crowded coffee market, one

of Illy's greatest challenges has been determining how to offer more flavor choices while defending this single "best" blend.

Inspired by Spanish molecular chef Ferran Adrià, Andrea Illy recently began "deconstructing" the blend. In the past three years, Illy has rolled out its nine arabica coffee components as separate crus, labeled Monoarabica.

"Arabica is an extremely rich genome," Andrea says. "People like to try the different crus, but they return to the blend."

Beautiful Is Beautiful

Illy earned its place in the pantheon of modern Italian brands with an aesthetic sense that goes beyond coffee. The company's design image started with a question Riccardo posed to his brother Francesco in 1992.

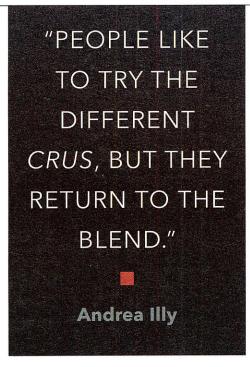
"What can we do to make people immediately understand that they are going to drink something that is different?" Riccardo asked. "To make them understand the quality before they drink it, and to make them pay attention?"

After days of thought, Francesco, the artist of the family, had an inspiration: "Why don't we Swatch-ize the cups?" This idea—adding bold design and color to coffee cups, as Swatch did for everyday watches—transformed Illy from coffee roaster to curator of style.

At the time, the Illys had already recruited Italian architect and designer Matteo Thun to design the brand's simple white porcelain cup; Francesco proposed going a step further, turning the cup into a canvas for world artists. Over the past 20-plus years, more than 500 painters, sculptors, designers, printmakers, filmmakers, musicians and photographers have decorated cups for the Illy Art Collection. With designs by luminaries including Francis Ford Coppola and Yoko Ono, the highly collectible cups sell as limited editions, typically in sets of six espresso cups and saucers, priced at about \$150.

A new global face for the brand began to take shape when Riccardo asked another question of Francesco: "I told him, 'Our logo is fine, but it could be better," Riccardo remembers. "'Why don't you get one of the painters to paint our logo?""

Francesco approached James Rosenquist, who painted what would become the new Illy logo. The original canvas hangs in Andrea's



office—a mix of acrylic paint and colorful paper strips. At its center is the trademark red square with the family name in free-flowing white lowercase letters.

With its blossoming culture of art and design, Andrea says, Illy became more than a roaster, establishing itself as a lifestyle merchant. "The whole personality of the company changed."

Beyond Coffee

little more than a decade ago, the Illys pondered the future of a family whose fourth generation now includes nine cousins. They weighed the economics of coffee as well as the effects of climate change; worst-case scenarios estimate that half the cultivatable

area for coffee may disappear by the end of the century.

"We wondered if we could continue to grow, selling one blend at a superpremium price," Riccardo recalls. "The answer was no—that in 20 years we will saturate the market. So we wondered, 'What do we need to do now to help our grandchildren grow the company?""

The family considered two options: Remain in coffee exclusively but expand downward into the middle market, or stay a superpremium brand, with the potentially risky strategy of diversifying outside the core business. The Illys unanimously chose the second option. "We didn't like the idea of producing an average quality," explains Riccardo. "We only like to produce what we like to eat and drink every day."

They began investing in small high-end companies that needed funding. These included an interest in Agrimontana, a Piedmont producer of jams and marrons glacés; a controlling stake in the French tea company Dammann Frères; and the purchase of Domori, an Italian chocolate producer that has been as much a pioneer in cocoa as the Illys have been in coffee.

Domori is the brainchild of Gianluca Franzoni, an Italian economics graduate who in the 1990s traveled to Venezuela and became obsessed with fine cocoa. Venezuela was then one of the last outposts of Criollo cocoa—a low-yield variety whose beans produce the world's most naturally sweet and complex chocolate. Franzoni founded his own Criollo-based chocolate company in Italy's Piedmont and began selling his low-sugar dark chocolate slabs in specialty shops.

Returning to Venezuela, Franzoni partnered with a local growing family to develop a 400-acre Criollo plantation. In 2006, Illy bought the company and invested heavily in its production facility at the foothills of the Italian Alps southwest of Turin. (Franzoni remains president.) As with coffee, fine artisanal chocolate is booming, and Domori represents the cutting edge. "We believe in the dream—that we can reinvent chocolate," Riccardo says. "We are producing more Criollo than the rest of the world, and we want to expand.

"The technique of tasting is exactly the same in chocolate as wine and coffee," he adds. Leading a Criollo tasting in the Domori plant, he speaks of roundness, fruit, floral aromas and acidity: "You can find the same flavors."

Montalcino

iccardo Illy has childhood memories of sipping his father's favorite wines—the fruity whites of Friuli. But in the 1980s, he developed a deeper appreciation of complex reds.

Riccardo befriended Italian wine and food critic Luigi Veronelli, who brought together Italy's high quality wine producers, restaurateurs and food suppliers at his cultural organization Seminario Permanente Luigi Veronelli. As a rising star in the coffee world, Riccardo was elected president of Veronelli's group and became close with celebrated winemakers including Barolo's Elio Altare and Maurizio Zanella of Ca' del Bosco.

"I sent them a machine, and they offered our coffee to visitors of their winery," says Riccardo, looking back on that period. "If they said a few words about our quality, this was much more important than a big newspaper advertisement."

In his home north of Trieste, Riccardo now has a wine cellar filled with more than 1,000 bottles, including French classics from Château Pétrus and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, to which he was introduced by the family's first wine lover, Francesco.

In 1987, Francesco stayed as a guest at Italian artist Sandro Chia's Castello Romitorio estate outside Montalcino and "fell in love with the place." Francesco became friends with Chia's winemaker, Carlo Vittori, who 10 years later told Francesco about a farm for sale in nearby Castelnuovo dell'Abate. Francesco bought the farm, Podere Le Ripi, and began planting vineyards.

Another decade on, Francesco turned his attention to neighboring estate Mastrojanni. Retired lawyer Gabriele Mastrojanni had founded

the winery in 1975, and his death in 2005 set off a family conflict that led to the estate being listed for sale.

By 2008, the Illys were ready for a new challenge. Early that year, Riccardo, who as a left-of-center independent official opposed the policies of former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, was defeated as regional president when Berlusconi's party swept back into power. Riccardo then turned his undivided attention to the company. That summer, Ernesto Illy died, and Francesco convinced his brothers to buy Mastrojanni.



Francesco Illy (left), pictured at Mastrojanni with property manager Andrea Machetti, persuaded his brothers to buy this Montalcino estate in 2008 to honor their grandfather's legacy of working the land.

"Our grandfather had had a farm in Istria, and the idea of all of us was to go back to these roots," Francesco says. "We bought a historical winery with a beautiful geological situation and *terroir*."

The Illys paid 16.5 million euros for about 220 acres—less than a third of which was under vine—overlooking the rippling landscape of the Val d'Orcia and the hovering extinct volcano Monte Amiata.

The family retained Mastrojanni manager Andrea Machetti and his team, and began investing in improvements such as new, smaller cement tanks and conical oak fermentors for parcel-by-parcel vinifications, French and Slavonian oak casks for aging, and the winery's first sorting tables. Not surprisingly, they also built a small lab for on-site testing.

The Illys have stuck to traditional growing and winemaking practices—fermenting wine on native yeasts and using no herbicides, chemical fertilizers or filtering. Many estate operations, such as pruning, racking and bottling, are done during a waning moon, when Riccardo says organic activity is at its lowest.

Another holistic touch is the new aging cellar. For the design, the Illys turned to the architect of the family—Francesco's son, Ernesto. His handsome bioarchitectural design

uses traditional brick arches and mortar along with tile, stone and wood, and is free of structural steel, which the Illys believe could form magnetic field-s and influence the wine. "The idea was that if magnetic fields affect us, they could affect the wine, [especially] the Brunello that must age in the cellar for three years," Riccardo says.

Mastrojanni produces one sweet late-harvest *passito*, a grappa and four traditional reds: Rosso di Montalcino, Brunello di Montalcino and two Brunello *crus*, Vigna Loreto and Vigna Schiena d'Asino, from adjacent vineyards. Mastrojanni also makes an IGT super Tuscan called San Pio, dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, from a 2.5-acre vineyard. But the Illys plan to uproot the 40-year-old Cabernet. "We can make a good wine from Cabernet, but making good wine is not enough anymore," Riccardo says. "We can make better wines and more unique wines with local varieties."

A few years ago, Machetti introduced Riccardo to a local wine from a rare indigenous grape called Ciliegiolo, and Riccardo was

impressed. "I love the flavors, of a very mature cherry, with good body and good acidity," he says. The Illys planted more than 3.5 acres of the grape in 2014.

In 2009, following the "Brunellogate" scandal, in which Italian authorities detected grapes other than Sangiovese in the Brunellos di Montalcino of certain estates, some producers asked the local consortium to compromise on the regulations and allow the inclusion of other grapes in the appellation's entry-level Rosso di Montalcino. Riccardo became a vocal opponent. "Sangiovese is such a great grape variety; why would you pollute it with other grapes from all over the world?" Riccardo argued. "You would not be adding something to the wine but subtracting a part of this wonderful grape."

What mystified Riccardo was not a just that proponents wanted to use international varieties but that they

"[THE ILLY
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Jacopo Biondi Santi

thought doing so would boost the marketability of their wines; this trend had come and gone years before. In other words, Riccardo says, advocates were not only wrong in their thinking, "they were late."

The Illys' position won over the consortium majority. It also impressed locals with deep roots in the area. "They didn't come into the wine business just for money," says an admiring Jacopo Biondi Santi, who leads the legendary Biondi-Santi estate. "They came to be part of history for a long time."

The Long Game

f you are not used to thinking in generational terms, you should not think

about entering wine," says Riccardo Illy. With the long view in mind, he says, in the next 10 to 20 years, cash flow from Illy's newer businesses of chocolate and tea will fund more wine purchases in Europe's most storied appellations.

"In the world, you have only a few areas where you produce what I call universal wines. In Italy there is Montalcino and Barolo. In France there is Champagne, Bordeaux and Burgundy," Riccardo explains. "These are wines that have existed for centuries and that we can expect will be consumed in the next centuries.

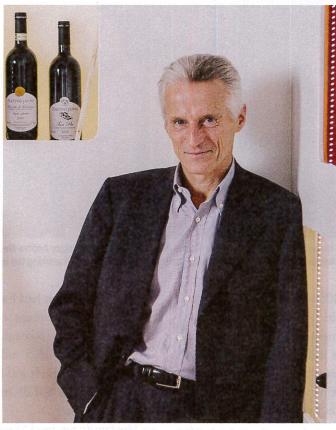
"The idea is to have a small group of autonomous wineries in universal wine areas, with no more than 200,000 bottles each," he continues.

It is afternoon on an early spring day. Standing in front of the Mastrojanni winery, Riccardo looks out over the winery's prized *crus* and breathes deeply. "It's a kind of paradise," he says.

Reflecting on the future of Italy, he says the country has not yet begun to realize the potential of its cornucopia of food and wine. "There are a few countries, like France and Italy, that have a huge opportunity for synergy—of the attractiveness of the products and the attractiveness of the places where the products are produced.

"My feeling is Italians have a treasure [on] their hands and only a few are using it," Riccardo says. "The Italian lifestyle is in its best consideration ever worldwide. The problems are not in the market—the problems are in Italy. We have too many companies that are too small and not ready to exploit this huge potential. For a country considered the best in the world for its food, it's not enough."

In order to make up for this lag, Riccardo believes, Italian entrepreneurs and producers must no longer walk. Instead, he says, "We have to run."



Riccardo Illy, shown here with bottlings of Mastrojanni, plans to expand Illy's holdings in fine wine.