



For immediate release
Press contact: Daniela Puglielli, Accent PR (908) 212 7846



THE ANCIENT TALE OF ANISE AND ITS LONG JOURNEY TO AMERICA



New Orleans, July 2012 -- As part of the “spirited” presentations of the Tales of the Cocktail festival, **Distilleria Varnelli** cordially invites you to the event “**Anise: The Mediterranean Treasure**” on Saturday July 28, from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm at the Queen Anne Ballroom, Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, LA. The seminar offers a rare occasion to compare different Mediterranean anises, neat and in preparation: *Varnelli*, as the best Italian dry anise, ouzo, arak, raki, anisado, and anisette. Mixologist Francesco Lafranconi - winner of the TOC 2009 Best Presenter Award- and Orietta Maria Varnelli, CEO of Distilleria Varnelli S.p.a., will transport attendees through an incredible historical and cultural journey, including an exclusive tasting of anise-based Varnelli’s liqueurs and aperitifs. Renowned mixologists from London, Anistatia Miller and Jared Brown, will bring their experience to the event as well.



The program will include also a short yet suggestive cultural presentation about the **FIRST American Chapter of the Ordre International des Anysetiers**, with Members in Medieval attire that will revive the legend and traditions of the ancient guild of Anysetiers, founded in 1263 in France. Members of the Louisiana *Bailliage* include **Francesco Lanfranconi**, who will lead the Chapter as Bailli, Tales of the Cocktail’s founders **Ann and Paul Tuennerman**, **Liz Williams** (Chair of Southern Food and Beverage Museum in NOLA), **Laura and Chris McMillan** of the Museum of American Cocktails – MOTAC, journalists **Camper English** and **Brenda Maitland**, mixologist **Jacques Bezuidenhout** and importer **Paolo Domeneghetti**.



A true Mediterranean gem, anise has a long history of use as a spice and fragrance. It is a flowering plant in the family Apiaceae, cultivated for at least 4,000 years and native to the eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia. It’s found in nature in two different species: Anise and Star Anise. Since the 12th century, the caravans were bringing anise from China to Alexandria, where the precious seeds were shipped to Genoa and Marseille, two major hubs of the Mediterranean Sea trade, before being sent to Paris to be assigned to Anysetiers who, after maceration and distillation of the resulting paste, used to manufacture drugs, ointments and liquids that they then catered to Kings, Lords and commoners.



[More...](#)



Today it is becoming a fashionable craze to prepare many cocktails containing this refreshing ingredient. Its delicate yet intense flavor has some similarities to liquorice, fennel, and tarragon. Western cuisines have long used anise to flavor some dishes, drinks, and candies, and it has a truly international appeal. Anise in fact is used to flavor Middle Eastern *arak*, Colombian *aguardiente*, French spirits *absinthe*, *aniset* and *pastis*, Greek *ouzo*, Bulgarian *mastika*, Italian *sambuca* and... *Varnelli* first awarded in 1950 as "the best Italian dry anise," Anise has also been used to flavor Dutch *Brokmöpke*, Peruvian and Spanish *anís*, Mexican *Xtabentún* and Turkish *rakı*. In the U.S., anise is used in some root beers.



"For the past generations, my family nurtured the culture and the production of anise and is proud to support the launch of the First Chapter of the Ordre International des Anysetiers," says Ms. Varnelli, who is also a Member of The Ordre International des Anysetiers, adding: "Its mission will be close to the one of the masters Anysetiers, who valued international friendship, cultural and fraternal solidarity towards others. I also find significant that the first American Chapter will be under the auspices of the Commanderie of Liguria, the Region that gave birth to Christopher Columbus: a pleasant historical coincidence!"



For additional information about Distilleria Varnelli please visit: www.varnelli.it (imported by by Domaine Select Wine Estates LLC www.dswe.com). Discount available (20%) for media by using code SPONSOR2012.

#



About Varnelli: The company was established in 1868, on the picturesque slopes of the Sibillini Mountains (Marche Region, Italy), with the keen herbalist Girolamo Varnelli, who created Amaro Sibilla, awarded the gold Medal in 1909 at the International Exhibition in Turin (Italy). In 1950, pursuing a tradition of excellence, another Varnelli liquor was awarded as "Best Italian Dry Anise." Today, the Varnelli family still runs the business, balancing a mix of tradition and innovation and focusing on the utmost quality ingredients. *Varnelli* is especially renowned for being "the best Italian dry anise," with a unique flavor among the Mediterranean aniseed drinks. Clear, brilliant, persistent and harmonious on the palate, it can be enjoyed neat or on the rocks, with dark chocolate, coffee, or while smoking your favorite cigar. An innovative ingredient for cocktails, *Varnelli* is also a surprising addition to many culinary recipes.