



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

Zaia: wine and driving, the list of questions nobody asks

“You can drink and drive. Just obey the law. Why, instead of demonizing wine, don't the self-appointed moralizers say that among the main causes of road accidents are violations of the highway code, speeding, tiredness and distraction, often caused by cell phone use and smoking, along with overmedication? We remind those now pointing the finger at wineries that it's above all hard drugs and liquor, sold even in supermarkets and the nightspots so quickly defended two years ago, that get people high and make them lose control”.

Thus spoke Farming. Food and Forestry Minister **Luca Zaia on a visit to Pantelleria**, where he discussed heroic viticulture and also returned to the issue of demonizing wine, so much debated lately. And on this subject the minister presented the press with his list of “Ten questions nobody is asking”.

“Even the World Health Organization”, the minister said, “reminds us that the **causes of crashes are many and often connected**. You can be prudent and virtuous but if the roads and road signs are inadequate, if you haven't slept enough or are taking medicines that make you drowsy or inattentive, the risk increases exponentially”.

“For a healthy person, two glasses of wine with meals hardly means getting drunk. **Why not teach people how to drink moderately, conscientiously, qualitatively**, instead of keeping mum about the habit, very common among young people, of buying liquor in supermarkets where there's no ID check or purchase limit, and drinking for the sake of drinking, often on an empty stomach, to get a quick high?”

And more: No one is talking about the increase in drugs like antidepressants, tranquillizers and antihistamines; or about the rise in cocaine use; or that people often drive for hours and hours, building up enormous mental and physical stress. Or that people talk on mobiles while driving, or get behind the wheel after a full day's work or not having slept even an hour. Or about the fact that poor car maintenance and not using seat belts cause particularly serious accidents. Instead they prefer to blame wine as bogeyman. **We, instead, want to tell the truth, to help construct and find again the culture of fine wine and food, which in Italy** has such rich reserves and has been so honored by the international scientific community”.

The ten questions no one is asking

1. Starting from the research centers themselves, data is rarely issued on other causes of accidents, **overmedication** first and foremost. Why doesn't anyone say that medicine consumption has dizzyingly increased, as even the Italian pharmaceuticals federation admits? Why aren't we told that in 2007 alone the



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consumption of mood stabilizers rose 7.9%, and by 7.8% sales of anti-histamines, sedatives and tranquillizers?

2. Why don't people start to consider that **driving** for hours and hours leads to physical and mental stress that causes many accidents?
3. Why isn't there more severity about using **mobile phones** while driving?
4. Why do those same people who in 2007, apropos of a ban on **servicing alcohol after 2 a.m.** in nightspots where they serve mainly liquor, championed these venues by calling the ban "ineffective and penalizing", and now point the finger at wineries?
5. Why don't they tell us that the major causes of accidents, as confirmed by 2007 ACI-ISTAT data, are: **not giving precedence** at streetlights and stop signs (17.59%); inattentive, careless driving (15.25%); speeding (12.20%) and tailgating (9.83%)?
6. Why is the fact being ignored that, from 1991 to 2007, the percentage of people using **cocaine**, a drug that makes you feel omnipotent and untouchable, has risen from 1.3% to 14.2%?
7. Why doesn't anyone wonder about the fact that Italy has no ban on **smoking in cars**, a cause of serious distraction and already prohibited under British law?
8. Why don't people realize that inadequate **car maintenance** and not using seatbelts cause extremely grave accidents?
9. Why, instead of demonizing wine, don't people demand greater attention from local boards to infrastructures and **road signs**, whose improvement in Germany has already brought considerable results?
10. Wine detractors maintain that alcohol, wine included, is the primary cause of road accidents. Why do they deliberately conceal a good part of WHO statements, according to which "**there are different factors that can lead to car accidents; the behavior and mental and physical state of the driver, the inappropriate use of liquor and drugs, the safety conditions of the vehicle and the roads, the use of psychotropic substances, the use of cell phones while driving and violations of the highway code**"?

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