



Sugherificio Molinas, a leading Italian company in the cork stopper industry, has created a selection of sensory perfect corks, made with 100% natural cork.

A product that combines technique, precision and talent, capable of expressing the two core values of the business: the value of human resources and technology.



MOLINAS
“SELEZIONE”
PERFECT
IN EVERY SENSE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN “SELEZIONE” MOLINAS?

“**Selezione**” Molinas is the innovative **one-piece 100% natural cork stopper**, compact and TCA free, sensorially perfect. This selection - available since 2016 - only includes cork stoppers that have passed the strictest quality controls carried out by our team of skilled technicians. Each cork stopper is carefully tested to ensure the absence of contamination and each batch is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity and guarantee, which certifies its quality. A quality that allows Sugherificio Molinas to ensure that, in the remote hypothesis that the cork could have a sensory deviation, the value of the bottle will be refunded.

A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CORK STOPPER



Each batch of “Selezione” Molinas, after being selected, is examined by **a panel of technicians specially trained to recognize any possible sensory deviation** present in the cork stopper.

The advantage over the use of an electronic nose is explained to us by **Mariangela Ciaffia**, manager of the laboratory at Sugherificio Molinas: “The electronic nose is an excellent tool, but it has some limitations that should not be overlooked. Particular attention must be paid to the calibration of the machine, to be repeated cyclically. Then, in addition to the cork taste, cork can have many other types of deviation: mould, vanilla, toasted, wet rag and many others. The electronic sorter can analyse the cork stopper only to find a maximum of 1 defect per analysis. With the sensory analysis carried out by our specialized technicians, any type of defect will be detected and removed, not just the taint due to the infamous TCA. “

WHO ARE THE “NOSES” OF SUGHERIFICIO MOLINAS AND HOW THEY OPERATE

The technicians skilled in the detection of cork defects are the “**noses**”, women selected for their strong recognition skills and olfactory memory who have been **trained for at least 240 hours in the laboratory**, supported by the olfactory selection manager to learn how to distinguish sensory deviations that indicate a certain contamination of the cork.

During training, the manager explains the sensation perceived from the cork stopper so that the operator recognizes and memorizes it; subsequently, the operator will identify the tainted cork stoppers with the supervision of the manager.

The important thing is **to create a panel as homogeneous as possible**, to try to make objective a work that depends a lot on subjective sensitivity.





TCA (or trichloroanisole) is certainly the best known defect, the molecule that gives the famous “cork taint” to a wine. Our noses, however, are able to recognize all the other contaminations:

- Tetrachloroanisole (TeCA), pentachloroanisole (PCA) and tribromoanisole (TBA), which cause the smell of mold
- Methylisoborneol (MIB), which causes the smell of mouldy earth
- Guaiacol, which causes a hint of phenolic and smokey
- Fungal aroma

To recognize these contaminations, the corks are soaked for 18-24 hours in untreated and unfiltered spring water to allow the aromatic substances present in the cork to volatilize and subsequently analysed one by one. To best perform this work, the operators work every day in two shifts of 2 hours, interspersed with a moment in which they perform other tasks. **A total of about 800,000 pieces are tested monthly**, but not all are “Selezione” Molinas. More than half of these cork stoppers are smelled from the “standard” batches in order to improve their organoleptic quality and to keep the operators continuously trained and monitored.

Only about 300,000 cork stoppers tested per month become “Selezione” Molinas. These cork stoppers are produced on request, starting from already validated batches that comply with the quality standards of our product specifications. These batches are then further selected by the most expert “noses”, to finally become, at the end of this long journey, the cork stoppers “Selezione” Molinas.



CONTINUOUS QUALITY CONTROL

The work of the operators is continuously monitored to ensure the high-quality standards of our cork stoppers. Before being definitively added to the staff of the panel of technicians, the noses, after training, must pass a final test in which they are asked to identify the sensory deviations in a batch of 100 cork stoppers (neutral and with defect) previously analysed and numbered. Only those who set up the test know which samples have the defect.

To pass the test, **the operators must identify the defective cork stoppers with no margin for error.** This test is repeated every three months even once you have been admitted to the panel and in the event of a negative result you will have to perform and pass a training phase again.

Furthermore, every day, **random checks** are carried out on the work of each operator and if a defect value of more than 1% is found in the cork stoppers, the batch is tested again.

Finally, **the physical health conditions** of the operators should not be overlooked. Common ailments such as a cold negatively affect their work, preventing them from correctly distinguishing the sensory deviations present in the cork stoppers. For this reason, they can only fill this role if they are in perfect state of health.

HUMAN RESOURCES AS ADDED VALUE

It is therefore the added value of men, or rather, of our women, that makes these cork stoppers one-of-a-kind. The Sugherificio Molinas recognizes and cultivates this value in every field, and it has been able to direct in the creation of a perfect product, where the maximum percentage of error allowed is one in a thousand. Only the shades of senses, **the value of the people and the comparison of opinions could lead to the creation of a noble product like this.** Only the human senses have been able to create the perfect cork, because, finally, it will be the human senses to taste the wine and not an electronic palate.

ABOUT US

Sugherificio Molinas is a family-run Sardinian company that for 100 years has been the spokesperson for the truest and most profound Made in Italy, the one that starts from the care of the raw material, passing through its transformation, up to the creation of the finished product. An international company, rooted in the territory, with a modern vision and the mission of giving life to a circular economy that sustains and nourishes itself, where solidarity and social responsibility are the pillars that have always guided the hand of those who lead it.

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