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**MARIANIS OF CASTELLO BANFI NAMED WINE FAMILY OF THE YEAR BY MEININGER
CRISTINA MARIANI-MAY ACCEPTS AWARD**

DUSSELDORF, MARCH 17, 2019 – The Mariani family, creators of Castello Banfi in Montalcino and “Builders of Brunello” for 40 years, received “Wine Family of the Year” at the Meininger Awards for Excellence in Wine and Spirits ceremonial event opening the ProWein trade fair – one of the most important exhibitions in the winemaking world.

Banfi president and CEO Cristina Mariani-May accepted the award on behalf of her family, saying, “This means so much to my family, and especially my father, the visionary who founded Castello Banfi in 1978. I am deeply honored to accept this prestigious award. My thanks go to the Meininger family and to the jury. I also thank the entire Banfi team who, during the last 40 years has walked side by side with my family.”

Given to one family each year, the award is decided by a jury of respected and influential journalists covering the global wine trade for the magazines published by Meininger, such as *Weinwirtschaft*, *Wine Business International*, *Sommelier*, and *Weinwelt*. In awarding the Mariani family, the jury stated, “Banfi is one of the most renowned wine houses of the world and your family has made a valuable contribution to Italian wine. Your sustainable management, tradition and modernity has allowed Banfi to play a leading role in the international wine market.”

This is the latest in a string of awards and recognition for Banfi and Mariani-May, who arrived in Dusseldorf on the heels of a trip to Porto, where she spoke to a crowd of thousands about Banfi’s pioneering sustainability efforts at the Climate Change Leadership, Solutions For The Wine Industry Conference, an event headlined by former US Vice President Al Gore. In 2018, Mariani-May was named “Woman of the Year” by *The Drinks Business*, and Castello Banfi earned the title “Winery of the Year” at both the 2019 Winemaker Challenge and the 2018 Sommelier Challenge. In 2017, Castello Banfi attained “Best Winery of the Year – Gran VinItaly” as top winery in the world for an unprecedented fifth time and named top winery in Italy for the fifteenth time.

About Castello Banfi

Castello Banfi, renowned for the renaissance of Brunello di Montalcino and its research in its Pursuit of Excellence, is solely owned by the Mariani Family, who in 1978 founded the estate in Montalcino, assembling a property of 7,100 acres for the production of quality wines by aligning closely with the culture and development of its territory. It is the first winery in the world to be awarded international recognition for Exceptional Environmental, Ethical and Social Responsibility (ISO 14001 and SA8000) as well as an International Leader in Customer Satisfaction (ISO 9001:2000) by the International Standard Organization based in Geneva, Switzerland. Castello Banfi has become a hallmark for Tuscan hospitality and food, and includes a classic taverna, enoteca, private glass museum, balsamic cellars, winery tours, and critically acclaimed, luxury boutique hotel “Il Borgo.” More information can be found at <http://castellobanfi.com>.

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