

## What was your background before attending VENIT?

Previous to joining the VENIT program I had no background in viticulture / enology or anything wine related other than drinking it and dreaming of owning a vineyard. My educational background is chemistry with a PhD in Advanced Molecular Photonics, though since this qualification I moved towards business administration and development.

## What was your occupation before attending VENIT?

As eluded to above upon completion of my PhD I began to diversify my training with positions in business development, with the bulk of my experience being gained as the head of European sales for a chemical company based in the North East of England. So rather than having a job working solely with chemicals alone I used my chemical knowledge to boost technical sales abilities for the company employing me.

## What is your current occupation?

I currently have three occupations stemming from my decision to join the VENIT masters. I stepped down from my previous position to that of a sales manager during the course – thus allowing me to have an income during my time in Italy though without it being a full time position. Secondly I co-founded a pharmaceutical services company in the UK which I also directed during my time in Italy. Taken together these show the available time which you have outside of the course – not to say you have to take other jobs, you could spend that time studying or travelling to vineyards around Italy (I also did a lot of that )

Finally I have also set up a wine and spirits company in Mexico with one of my VENIT course mates.

## How much did VENIT contribute to such a change?

Obviously the final occupation I have would not have been possible without taking the VENIT course. Both the education received as well as the contacts made have allowed for the inception and launch of the company. The longer term aim is still to have my own vineyard at some point and this Mexican venture will go a long way to help the two of us understand the world of viticulture and enology more before land is invested in.

Outside of the wine-world, living in Italy was a great experience and the course led me to meet such a diverse and lovely group of people. Regardless of what your background is both educationally or professionally I guarantee that you'll have a great time doing the VENIT masters and will learn a great deal about the wider topics currently involved in the sector!

