

Hospitality manager: the 5 key skills to succeed in wine tourism

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Wine tourism is evolving rapidly, and the role of the Hospitality Manager has become strategic for Italian wineries. This article outlines the five most important skills required to meet the growing expectations of a global audience, from emotional communication to wine knowledge and storytelling, as highlighted in a national survey by Wine Tourism Hub.

With wine tourism constantly evolving, the Hospitality Manager has become a crucial figure for Italian wineries. **Expectations for this role have grown, demanding an increasingly complex skill set.**

A recent national survey by Wine Tourism Hub shed light on the

most essential qualities identified by wineries for their hospitality staff. It highlights how increasingly demanding and international audiences are seeking more authentic and engaging experiences.

The Most Requested Skills

Here's an overview of the main skills that emerged from the survey:

- **Communication and interpersonal skills (36.2%)**

The human aspect is central to wine tourism. **Visitors seek emotionally engaging experiences that make them feel part of a story.** The ideal Hospitality Manager can welcome, listen, and build genuine dialogue with tourists, turning a simple visit into a memorable experience.

- **Language skills (31.5%)**

With the rise of international tourists, speaking at least one foreign language, preferably English, has become essential. **Being able to describe wines, tell the winery's story, and answer questions fluently is key to professional hospitality.**

- **Wine and territory knowledge (27.7%)**

While not as prioritized as soft skills, in-depth knowledge of wines, production techniques, and the local area is essential to build credibility and respond to expert wine tourists. **This competence enhances the visitor's trust and enriches the experience.**

- **Event planning abilities (3.1%)**

Wine tourism isn't limited to cellar visits: **Organizing**

events, thematic tastings, and immersive experiences adds value and builds loyalty.

- **Digital and social media skills (1.5%)**

Though still underappreciated, digital tools are useful for promoting events and engaging customers online. **This can help reach a younger, more dynamic audience.**

A transversal insight from the survey is the ability to use storytelling. Although not directly listed among the top skills, it underpins communication, language, and territorial knowledge.

Telling authentic and engaging stories builds an emotional connection between the tourist and the brand. Effective storytelling enhances perceived value and encourages customer loyalty, turning visitors into brand ambassadors.

The skills outlined in the survey portray a Hospitality Manager profile that goes far beyond technical wine knowledge. Empathy, communication, and global customer engagement are the keys to success.

For Italian wineries, investing in the training of hospitality staff is now essential. Only then can they compete in an increasingly demanding market and fully harness the extraordinary potential of Italian wine tourism.

Key points

- **Communication and empathy are essential** to emotionally engage wine tourists.
- **Language fluency**, especially in English, ensures global guest satisfaction.

- **Wine and territory knowledge build credibility** with expert visitors.
- **Event planning adds value** beyond standard tastings and tours.
- **Storytelling enhances brand connection** and visitor loyalty.