

“We’d just like to make wine...” but the world no longer allows it. A producer’s testimony

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A small Italian wine producer's heartfelt letter exposes the crisis facing traditional winemakers: producing quality wine is no longer enough. Today's market demands they become marketers, event organizers, and digital experts simultaneously. This testimony reveals the systemic failures leaving small producers struggling between their craft and survival in an evolving industry.

Sometimes, in our work, messages arrive that are worth more than a thousand market analyses. These are real voices, not seeking consensus but asking to be heard.

Here's one that deserves to be shared without filters:

"Sometimes we'd simply like to produce wine and do it as well as possible! We'd like aperitifs, restaurants, exports, etc. to be handled by professionals, not have to 'steal' part of their job. We'd like to be part of a healthy system, with clear rules and roles instead of scraping by opening houses, vineyards, letting anyone harvest! We'd like to be paid for the wine we produce, not because we organize yoga classes or a thousand other things – not provided for, moreover, by agritourism regulations. But by now we have to know how to do everything – including using social media, platforms, selling online, allowing online booking.. And doing everything well is impossible, especially for small realities that can't afford to pay others! Direct sales yes! That's one of the few possibilities to survive, even for tiny realities like ours."

A raw testimony that perfectly summarizes the silent tsunami overwhelming so many micro and small Italian wine producers.

Dear producer (and with you many others), you're right: the bar has been raised. And it keeps rising. And it's not us, the communicators, asking for it. **It's the market that's raising it. It's the consumer who's changing. It's the world that runs and doesn't turn back to wait for those who remain anchored to the romantic idea of "I only make wine."**

No, today you can no longer "just make wine." It's not enough. And this isn't a moral judgment. It's a fact. You may like it or not, but wine today is experience, content, communication, relationship, storytelling, service. It doesn't sell itself. It doesn't sell in silence. And, above all, it doesn't sell from afar, waiting behind the winery gate.

Your bitterness is that of many: you feel forced to do everything, from graphics to Instagram posts, from labels to logistics. And while time for the vineyard diminishes, frustration grows. It's a disconnect between vocation and

necessity. But it's not just a matter of multitasking: it's a matter of system.

You've touched on a fundamental point: there is no healthy system. There's no structured support network for small businesses. There's no shared vision of wine tourism. **There's no direction that distributes roles coherently, that helps those who produce to produce and those who communicate to communicate.**

And so everyone manages on their own. Some open their home doors, some transform their vineyard into a photo set, some offer "experiential" harvests just to sell one more bottle.

But I want to tell you something: perhaps it's no longer time to say "we'd like." It's time to choose. To react. To decide who we want to be. Do we want to be those chasing a past that won't return? Or do we want to be those who, though struggling, try to understand how to stay alive in a changing market?

The point isn't to give up your identity, but to have the courage to evolve it. To find alliances. To train. To understand where to invest time and where to delegate. And if you can't do everything, then you must choose lucidly what to do well.

In the end, your outburst closes with a glimmer of hope:

"Direct sales yes! That's a real possibility to survive."

There: let's start from there. From human relationships, from direct contact, from authentic encounters. But let's do it well. With updated tools. With professionalism. Because – like it or not – bottles are sold one at a time. And with great effort.

But they sell. If you're there. If you believe in it. If you

accept that today producing wine also means being an entrepreneur, host, communicator, seller. And perhaps, thinking about it, it's also an extraordinary opportunity for rebirth.

Thank you for reminding us. Let's keep talking about it. Because change always starts with a voice that has the courage to tell the truth.

Key points

1. **Small wine producers can no longer survive by only making wine** in today's market
2. **Producers must juggle multiple roles:** marketer, host, social media manager, and entrepreneur
3. **There's no healthy system or support network** for small Italian wineries
4. **Direct sales remain one of few viable survival strategies** for micro producers
5. **The choice is clear: evolve and adapt** or chase a past that won't return