

“I don’t want my winery to become a bar”: overcoming fear to embrace the new wine tourism

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“Lavinia, I make quality wine. I don’t want my winery to become a bar”. If I had a euro for every time a producer said this sentence to me, I would probably have already bought a castle in Burgundy. **It is a very widespread fear, almost visceral.** The idea of opening the doors to informal consumption, detached from the rigid protocol of the guided tour, is often perceived as a downgrade, a betrayal of the nobility of the product.

But today I want to challenge this belief, because the market is asking us for exactly the overturning of this

paradigm. **Let's tell each other the truth with great honesty: wine is no longer popular.** We have turned it into a subject of study, we have loaded it with such austerity that it drives away anyone simply looking for a moment of leisure. The contemporary tourist looks for leisure experiences: they want to feel good, relax, enjoy the landscape and consume without worries.

The concept of “bar” in the winery

We must overcome the fear that a freer welcome will turn the winery into a noisy provincial bar. We are not asking you to become a bar. **We are suggesting that you become a sort of wine living room.** It is a vast difference.

The brand bar (or wine lounge) is an identity-driven and exclusive place where the customer can immerse themselves physically and emotionally in the universe of your company, and clearly in your wine. **Try asking yourselves this question: if a customer cannot come and enjoy your wine in total serenity right at your home, in the place where it is born, where else should they do it?** Why must we force a tourist who just wants to relax in your garden to listen, at all costs, to a technical lesson on wine production?

The art of informal storytelling

Of course, opening the doors to free consumption does not mean giving up communicating your value. **On the contrary, this is where the real game is played.** It is perfectly fine for a guest to come to you “only” to drink a couple of glasses without booking the full tour. But it must be you, or your Hospitality Managers, who are so good at seizing that informal moment to tell your story and to encourage the sale of bottles.

True mastery lies not in giving an hour-long monologue in the barrel room, but in making the customer fall in love with your

philosophy in the three minutes in which you serve them the glass at the table, in a light, captivating and non-invasive way. It is an extremely delicate balance. How do you open up to leisure tourism without cheapening the brand? How do you manage the space so that high-end tours and those who come only for an afternoon aperitif can coexist?

Transforming the winery into an accessible and profitable destination is a complex strategic operation. This is precisely why, in our training courses dedicated to Hospitality and Direct to Consumer, we tackle this dilemma directly. We work side by side with companies to structure hybrid hospitality formats, teaching teams how to manage informal communication and how to turn a simple “bar” glass into a formidable tool for loyalty and sales.

Key points:

1. **Create a wine lounge** where guests experience your brand and wine in relaxed serenity.
2. **Welcome leisure visitors** who simply want to relax and enjoy a glass in your garden.
3. **Tell your story informally** during the three minutes spent serving each glass at the table.
4. **Train your Hospitality Managers** to turn casual tastings into bottle sales.
5. **Design hybrid hospitality formats** so premium tours and aperitif guests coexist harmoniously.