

Villa Sandi, Flavio Geretto: priorities? Consolidation, incoming, and brand awareness

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Villa Sandi aims to consolidate its global presence in 2025, focusing on key markets like the US and UK while expanding into Africa and South America. Brand awareness, winery visits, and the no/low alcohol segment remain strategic priorities. Flavio Geretto highlights the company's commitment to strengthening partnerships, enhancing Prosecco's global appeal, and navigating evolving market challenges.

In the dynamic international wine scene, Villa Sandi stands out with a growth strategy that merges **tradition and innovation**. In this interview, Flavio Geretto, the company's Commercial Director, reflects on a 2024 marked by market consolidation, a special focus on the Travel Retail sector,

and an increased brand awareness through targeted advertising campaigns.

The United States remains a key market, while the United Kingdom, despite new excise duties, continues to be central to **Prosecco's growth**. The company navigates an increasingly complex market with clarity, investing in **new opportunities** in Africa and South America, while keeping an eye on China, a market undergoing repositioning.

Geretto highlights that the key to success lies in maintaining a **strong identity**, balancing the approach of a large company with the values of smaller businesses. In terms of emerging trends, Villa Sandi is attentive to the **no/low alcohol** segment, developing projects that meet evolving consumer demands.

Looking ahead to 2025, the guiding principle is **consolidation**: strengthening positions in key markets, enhancing winery visits, and continuing to promote Prosecco worldwide. Villa Sandi embarks on this journey with a strategic vision, reaffirming its role as an ambassador of Italian excellence.

What were the main results achieved by Villa Sandi in international markets during 2024?

2024 was undeniably a successful year, not only in terms of revenue growth but, more importantly, for the **strengthening** of a multi-year brand development plan that is already yielding positive results. We recorded significant growth in international markets, with a particular focus on the **Travel Retail** sector, where we were honored as the Best Product of 2024.

We also established **new partnerships** in key markets such as the United States. Additionally, we advanced our communication strategy, launching our first advertising campaign in Italy

for the **La Gioiosa** brand, broadcast on national channels, which received highly positive feedback.

Equally important were our promotional and marketing efforts abroad, such as the **London campaign** featuring the iconic red buses and metro stations, further boosting brand recognition.

Among the 130 countries where you operate, which have shown the most significant growth, and which have faced greater challenges?

The **United States** remains a market with vast growth potential, and this trend continued in **2024**. We established a new partnership for the **Villa Sandi** brand, which is already delivering promising results.

Furthermore, we strengthened our position in Europe, with **Germany** remaining one of our top three markets, despite some challenges.

We are also exploring **new opportunities** in Africa and South America, as we believe there are strong prospects for Italian wines, particularly for sparkling wines. In Asia, while the momentum is not at its peak, we have launched **significant campaigns** in the Chinese market.

Which strategies have proven most effective in consolidating Villa Sandi's presence globally?

Villa Sandi is a group that represents **five companies** and as many brands, three of which operate in the Prosecco sector. The Prosecco category is driving the Made in Italy trend, boosting the entire Italian wine industry.

Our main strategy is to promote and enhance our **sparkling**

wines, while maintaining Villa Sandi's distinctive identity: a **family-run company**, deeply rooted in a unique territory, and one of the few major players still in the hands of its founding family.

A major asset in this direction has been Borgo Conventi in Collio. I firmly believe that in a few years, **Friuli** and particularly Collio will reclaim a leading role in the Italian and international wine scene.

The UK market has always been one of the most important for Villa Sandi and for Prosecco in general. What were the key takeaways from 2024?

The **United Kingdom** is an essential market for Italy and Prosecco, and it remains crucial for us as well. In 2024, we expanded our distribution network, particularly for our Villa Sandi and La Gioiosa brands.

However, it remains an extremely competitive market, especially with regulatory and taxation changes.

Our advantage at Villa Sandi, La Gioiosa, and Casa Gheller has been our significant investments in branding. This has helped us gain recognition from both buyers and consumers.

From February 2024, excise duties on wine (and all non-draft alcoholic beverages) increased in the UK. How did Villa Sandi prepare for this, and what are your 2025 forecasts?

The **"easement"** for wine was a temporary measure introduced on August 1, 2023, and valid until February 1, 2025, aimed at simplifying the post-Brexit tax framework. Currently,

a single tax rate applies to wines with alcohol content between 11.5% and 14.5%.

Now, different tax brackets are being introduced, based on the exact alcohol content of each wine, leading to significant cost increases for businesses and importers.

For Prosecco, the situation is similar, but its lower alcohol content might be a slight advantage, leading to lower taxation compared to other wines.

Villa Sandi is already responding to the growing demand for no/low alcohol wines (e.g., La Gioiosa 0.0). What are the next steps?

We have been producing a **zero-alcohol** product under the La Gioiosa brand for five years, and in 2024, we introduced a Villa Sandi version, designed for the on-trade sector.

We strongly believe in understanding consumer trends, rather than just focusing on the industry's perspective.

What are Villa Sandi's main objectives for 2025 in international markets?

Our focus is on consolidation. We will launch two major projects in France and continue to promote our territory, focusing on winery visits to turn guests into ambassadors of their experiences.

Another key objective is to enhance our sparkling wines and strengthen their global appeal. In 2024, I received a significant award in London from Glass of Bubbly for my "Significant Contribution" to promoting sparkling wines worldwide.

This is not an end but a starting point, as I intend to keep

contributing to the growth of this category, which is increasingly favored by consumers.

Key Points

1. Villa Sandi prioritizes global market consolidation, with key focus areas in the US, UK, and emerging markets.
2. Strong investments in branding and winery experiences enhance consumer engagement and brand awareness.
3. The no/low alcohol segment is a growing priority, with La Gioiosa 0.0 and Villa Sandi's new offering.
4. Tax changes in the UK pose challenges, but Prosecco's lower alcohol content provides a competitive advantage.
5. The company is expanding into Africa and South America while monitoring opportunities in China.



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