

# We can no longer ignore the rise of neo-prohibitionism concerning wine

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 27 Novembre 2023



In the last month, many articles have discussed the **intricate connection between wine and health**. Particularly interesting pieces include [Felicity Carter's in Meininger's International](#) and [Jeff Siegel's on the Wine Industry Network](#).

Felicity Carter, on her podcast 'The Business of Drinks,' made a striking statement: **'It's crucial for publications discussing wine to take a more responsible approach to moderate consumption and health.** I've seen too many articles painting wine as a miraculous cure for everything, from cancer to dementia. My worry is that anti-alcohol advocates might use these articles to accuse the wine industry of knowingly misleading people about wine's health benefits.'

She also added, **'I don't think those in the wine industry truly comprehend the level of opposition and funding against alcohol consumption'**.

In essence, the commentary I've been reading converges to one point: **we must seriously address neo-prohibitionism regarding wine and not dismiss it as another passing attack.**

The anti-alcohol lobby's investment, especially in economic terms, surpasses what we've seen in previous years. Just look at the surge of Instagram posts portraying alcohol, even in moderation, as causing weight gain, skin issues, and premature aging. **These posts include compelling before-and-after images of individuals after consuming alcoholic beverages.** The catch? We don't even know who's behind these posts, as if they were some official institution's public service announcements.

## **So, what's the plan?**

Considering the experts' opinions, **here's a summary defending moderate wine consumption:**

- Taking neo-prohibitionism seriously, **avoiding overemphasizing wine's health benefits**, and opting for a more balanced approach;
- Carefully **highlighting the flaws in studies** linking moderate wine consumption to public health risks;
- **Promoting scientifically backed research showcasing wine's benefits**, especially when part of a balanced Mediterranean diet. This supports moderate wine consumption as a healthy lifestyle choice.
- **Offering mainstream media a different perspective.** It's crucial to influence traditional media to present a balanced view on alcohol consumption and wine's benefits, countering the prevailing neo-prohibitionist narrative.
- In marketing, **focus on wine's synergy with food**,

emphasizing culinary experiences and the joys of food and wine.

**Paul Tincknell from Tincknell & Tincknell consultancy in Napa, California, offers valuable input:** 'Pairing wine with food may sound cliché, but it's what can uplift wine. Wine complements dinners, picnics, lunches—better than beer, much better than spirits. However, it's time to rethink 'meal wines' and dispel myths like steak being best with Cabernet and fish with Chardonnay.'

The wine industry must embrace transparency too. Tim McDonald, a renowned Californian marketer, recommends starting with transparent labeling. He argues that **honesty is crucial and supports nutritional labeling efforts**, believing wine compares favorably to other drinks in terms of calories, additives, carbs, and sugars.

In conclusion, **it's vital for the wine industry to debunk myths about wine while retaining its core values.**

It's not about losing those intangible values but showing wine for what it is—**strengths and limitations included.**

And if someone is willing to take responsibility for damaging a \$333 billion sector (which rises to \$1.624 trillion when combining the entire alcoholic beverage industry), with an economic impact ten times greater and a significant role in territorial and landscape conservation, **at least have the courage to come out completely to clarify its real political coverings and ultimate goals.**