

# What does your winery visitor actually remember when they get home?

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*Most wineries invest heavily in crafting compelling narratives for their visitors. Yet three months later, guests struggle to recall even the winery's name. The problem isn't the quality of the storytelling – it's its structure. Like a song without a chorus, many wineries offer rich, detailed experiences but fail to distil one memorable, specific element that visitors can carry home and share with others.*

What do I want the wine tourist to remember about me, once they're back home? Not what I told them, but what I'd like them to carry with them. This is one of the questions I ask winery hospitality teams most often.

Picture a scene you've probably experienced, from one side or the other. A visit that went well. The wine tourist listened attentively, asked questions, maybe even bought a few bottles. You return to your work with the feeling that something good just happened.

Three months later, that same visitor is having dinner with friends and opens one of the bottles they brought home from your winery. Someone asks where it's from. They smile, think for a moment, and say: "a beautiful winery we visited a few months ago." The winery's name, perhaps, never even comes up.

**This is the moment where many wineries lose something that's very hard to recover.** Not during the visit, which almost always works. But afterwards, at the point where the visitor should become an involuntary ambassador, someone who tells others your story. If they have nothing precise to say at that moment, they'll say something generic. And generic, in wine, distinguishes no one.

The issue isn't a narrative that's uninteresting or underprepared – in fact, it's often the opposite: the narrative is rich, dense, carefully crafted in its details – perhaps too carefully. Too many identity elements all at once, all equally important, all presented with the same emphasis. And when everything is important, the listener's brain does the only thing it knows how to do in these situations: it selects randomly, or doesn't select at all.

There's a useful metaphor for explaining this mechanism: think of a song you know well, any song. You probably know the chorus by heart, but the verses you remember less, or not at all. Yet the verses almost always contain the richest, most narrative, most complex part of the song. The chorus is often simpler, more repetitive, sometimes even less original. But it's what sticks.

Songwriters know this and, in fact, work to build that chorus

with the goal of making it linger in the mind. Because they know the verses create the experience, but the chorus is what people will take with them when they leave the concert.

Italian wineries, in most cases, have extraordinary verses but no chorus. They have family stories spanning generations, vineyards that defy logistics and geography, production choices that speak to a precise philosophy. But they rarely stop to ask themselves: out of all this, what do we want to remain? Not “what matters most to us”, which is a different question, but what is simple enough, precise enough and distinctive enough to survive in the wine tourist’s memory.

The answer, as is often the case, isn’t what you’d expect. The deepest identity elements – values, sustainability, tradition, the relationship with the land – are often the ones that survive word-of-mouth least well, precisely because they’re shared by so many different realities.

**What survives instead is almost always something specific.** An unexpected detail, a story with a recognisable narrative shape, an element that creates a precise image in the mind of the listener.

Finding that chorus requires work that has little to do with marketing in the traditional sense of the word. It’s closer to an exercise in subtraction. You start from a complete inventory of everything you are and everything you do, and you remove, lighten, concentrate, until what remains is that particular distinctive element that stands on its own, holds up independently, and will most likely become the anecdote wine tourists will still remember and retell three months after their visit.

That element isn’t necessarily the most representative of your identity. Often it isn’t. But it’s the one that opens the door. The one that ensures your name, the next time it appears on a list, on a shelf, or in a conversation, is remembered.

The winery visit remains one of the most powerful tools available for building an authentic relationship with wine buyers. But that authenticity alone isn't enough to create memory. It also takes a deliberate choice about what to leave behind. Not everything, not the best, but what stays in the mind.

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## Key points

1. *Visitors often forget the winery's name* just months after an otherwise successful visit.
2. **Overloading guests with too many identity elements prevents any single one from sticking.**
3. **The most memorable detail is rarely the most important,** but it opens every future conversation.
4. **Finding your "chorus" means subtracting, not adding:** one precise, standalone, retellable element.
5. **Authenticity alone doesn't build memory,** it requires a deliberate choice about what to leave behind.