

# Wine, 2025, and the art of staying on one's feet

scritto da Fabio Piccoli | 31 Dicembre 2025



*This editorial reflects on the wine industry's challenges throughout 2025, moving away from easy narratives toward a gritty, realistic outlook. It examines economic pressures and changing consumer habits, ultimately finding hope in the sector's resilience. It is a sober call for awareness and persistence, shifting from mere optimism to a more structured and conscious professional approach.*

The sector is going through a quiet but real moment: less space for easy stories, more need to face reality. It is an uncomfortable phase, certainly, but also a decisive one to distinguish what is structured from what, until yesterday, lived on inertia. **This phase serves as a filter between solid business structures and those driven by simple momentum.**

I have thought a lot about what to write in my usual year-end editorial. As always. Perhaps more than usual. If I had relied on a classic balance sheet for 2025, lining up the milestones of these twelve months, a rather uninviting list would have emerged: costs that do not decrease, markets that do not take off. **An inventory of shrinking margins and geopolitical uncertainties that do not ask for permission before knocking.**

If I had then projected forward, trying to look at the near future, I would have struggled to find truly encouraging signals. A few glimmers, sure, but more like a crack under the door than a wide-open window. The kind that makes you think: “yes, some light is getting through... but the air remains heavy.” **Looking ahead, the signs of recovery appear more like faint glimmers than a clear path forward.**

And if I had finally focused on the stories heard in this 2025—wine entrepreneurs, managers, importers, distributors, buyers, colleagues—I would have had to acknowledge that optimism was not the most frequent guest. Worry yes, realism a lot, sometimes fatigue. True enthusiasm was decidedly less present. **In the conversations of 2025, realism and fatigue often took precedence over traditional industry optimism.**

In short, I wrote and rewrote this editorial several times. Every version seemed correct, but none seemed right. All too serious, too dense, too similar to what we already know. Then I thought that perhaps, for once, the point was not to add analysis, but to take away some weight. **The goal of this reflection shifted from providing dense analysis to offering a lighter, more sustainable perspective.**

Not out of superficiality—the historical moment does not allow it—but for healthy survival. Because the wine world today is probably facing one of the most complex phases of its economic evolution: a storm made not of a single front, but of many crossing currents. **No one truly possesses a complete map to navigate the current complexities of the global wine market.**

Wine, which by definition requires time, patience, and long-term vision, finds itself immersed in an era that runs, simplifies, reduces, and polarizes. Where everything must be immediate, measurable, and replicable. If it is not, it risks seeming superfluous. Not useless, but “postponable.” **In a fast-paced world, wine risks being labeled as postponable, which is always the first category to suffer.**

Yet, between one difficulty and another, there is an element that continues to strike me: no one has truly stopped trying. No one has said “enough” lightly. There are those who slowed down, those who changed course, those who reduced sails, or rediscovered forgotten markets. **Despite the challenges, the wine sector remains driven by people who continue to think, struggle, and try again.**

Perhaps the true signal, quiet but real, is precisely this: the sector is less euphoric but more aware. Less inclined to easy stories, more forced to face reality. It is an uncomfortable phase, certainly. But also a phase that separates what is structured from what lived on inertia. **The current crisis is acting as a necessary separator between structured businesses and those surviving on past inertia.**

For this reason, in the end, I decided that this editorial should be neither a war bulletin nor a motivational postcard. Rather, a sober toast. One made without uncorking rare bottles, but with an honest wine, perhaps drunk standing up, looking each other in the eye. **This editorial concludes with a sober toast to the resilience of those still standing in the industry.**

“It is not simple, but we are still here.” And perhaps, in these times, that is not a small thing. Happy end of the year. And may the next one surprise us, possibly in a positive way. Even just a little. **Acknowledging that we are still here is perhaps the most powerful statement for the upcoming year.**

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## Key points

1. **The 2025 wine market faced high costs and uncertain geopolitical factors,** making economic growth significantly more difficult to achieve.
2. **A shift from surface-level optimism to deep realism** has characterized the sector's professional conversations throughout the year.
3. **The current climate acts as a structural filter,** distinguishing resilient, well-organized companies from those relying purely on market inertia.
4. **Despite complex economic "currents," industry professionals demonstrate persistence and adaptability** by exploring new markets and product strategies.