The insurmountable challenges of wineries wanting to engage in wine tourism

scritto da Redazione Wine Meridian | 13 Giugno 2024



Wine tourism can be a real boon for wineries as it offers fantastic opportunities for growth and enhancement. However, it’s not all smooth sailing, especially for smaller wineries or those tucked away in less frequented corners.

In this article, we delve into three major hurdles that can make everything more complicated: the lack of dedicated staff, the location in rural areas, and the always tight budget.

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1. Lack of dedicated hospitality staff

“I handle the winery visits but I’m also a jack-of-all-trades”: this is what many hospitality workers tell us. The role of the Hospitality Manager often involves managing not just the wine tourism business, but also marketing, sales, administration, and sometimes production. This overlap of roles hinders progress: how can value be created when one is always in emergency mode?

2. Undesirable location

Investing in the Hospitality Manager, ensuring the resources to allow them to focus exclusively on their role, is essential for improving the quality of welcome and the wine tourism experience.

Wineries located in lesser-known or non-traditional wine regions face the challenge of attracting visitors, who often prefer established wine tourism destinations.

However, cooperation can turn the tables. Success stories tell us that collaborating with consortia, tour operators, and especially with restaurants, bed and breakfasts, and other wineries is the key to success. Wine tourism is also about this: unity that strengthens the value of one’s territory.

3. Limited budget

A limited budget is the problem most commonly lamented by companies, especially smaller wineries. In our opinion, companies tend to worry too much about investments that are actually less important than they think, such as renovating or expanding a tasting room that seems to need to be perfect.

Much of the wine tourism activity can be well executed with minimal investments. Key elements such as an accurate description on the website, a warm welcome, engaging

storytelling, and good wine are actions that do not require large expenditures but can define the visitor’s experience.

Despite these challenges seeming insurmountable, with the right strategies and a dedicated approach, even wineries in less ideal situations can benefit from wine tourism.

The Wine Tourism Hub Academy offers a new course for Hospitality Managers that provides the tools and skills necessary to turn wine tourism into a successful and profitable component of the wine business, emphasizing the importance of qualified personnel, effective marketing techniques, and optimal resource management.