

“For winery visits please call”: the best way not to sell wine to young people

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Italian wineries possess world-class wines and stunning locations, yet lose young visitors due to antiquated booking systems requiring phone calls. With 62% of 18-34 year-olds actively avoiding calls, the “phone to book” approach creates a paradox where exceptional wine experiences remain inaccessible to the very demographic wineries claim to want.

The phone rings at the winery. Once, twice, three times. No one answers. You try again after lunch: busy. You search the company website: information about visits is buried in a paragraph written four years ago, hidden in the “Contacts” subsection (if you find it).

In the end, you give up and book that winery in Tuscany that has a nice “Book your visit” button on the homepage. Welcome to the paradox of Italian wine tourism: we have the best wines in the world, the most beautiful and authentic wineries in Europe, but booking a visit is often an odyssey worthy of Homer.

The phone? No thanks, I’m Gen Z

Restaurant industry data should set off more than a few alarm bells in the wine world too. According to a recent survey by Uswitch, 62% of young people between 18 and 34 actively avoid phone calls: they ignore the call, respond via message, or look for online solutions. A quarter of them never answer unknown numbers. Almost 70% prefer writing rather than talking on the phone.

Now, imagine a millennial passionate about natural wine who wants to visit that small biodynamic winery everyone’s talking about. They open the website: beautiful photos of vineyards at sunset, the company philosophy written in elegant fonts, maybe even an emotional video with the producer’s grandfather. Perfect.

And the visits? After ten minutes of navigating through pages and subpages, they find a measly “For information call 0123-456789 Monday to Friday, 9am-12pm.” Companies know who calls the winery, but they’ll never know who closed the website and DIDN’T call.

“We don’t want to disturb”

What if Italian wineries made visitors feel like they’re asking for a personal favor? Visit information is treated like a state secret, hidden in the depths of websites stuck in 2015. When you find it, you discover impossible schedules (“only the second Tuesday of the month”), vague contacts (“for reservations, contact the office”), or the classic “call to

arrange.”

The implicit message is: “If you really insist on coming, call us. But don’t disturb too much, we’re working here.” Yet these same wineries complain about low turnout, about wine tourism not being a real source of revenue, about young people drinking spritz instead of Nebbiolo. How can you blame them? To book a spritz you just need a tap on an app. To visit a winery you need the determination of Christopher Columbus.

Punti chiave

- 1. 62% of young adults actively avoid phone calls and prefer digital booking methods**
- 2. Italian wineries hide visit information on outdated websites** requiring phone contact
- 3. “Call to book” policy creates barrier between wineries and younger consumers**
- 4. Wineries complain about low turnout while maintaining inconvenient booking systems**
- 5. Competitors with simple online booking win customers by default**