Consumer Countries/Markets

‘Significant step change’ takes place in wine prices

The average price of still wine in UK retailers is moving up at speed as supermarkets focus on expanding ranges over £7. Explaining the reason for the move upwards in average wine bottle prices, general manager of Concha y Toro UK, Simon Doyle, told the drinks business that it was due to an expansion in the number of more upmarket wines on supermarkets’ shelves.

A final and further reason for the rise in average wine prices concerns a change in promotional approach by the retailers. “The amount of discount when wine is on promotion is dropping substantially,” said Doyle. “Not only has the number of weeks that wines are on deals fallen, but the discount is more likely to be 10-20%, rather than 20% or more,” he said.

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Technology

Keeping an open mind on closures

Cork is still king in the consumer’s mind, but how do other closures stack up across the world?

For many years in the wine business, mention of cork has often been a good way to start an argument. Many consumers still love it, as natural cork provides the assurance of a wine well-made, traditionally bottled and with the Pavlovian opening “pop” acts as a distinct mood-enhancer. Many producers also love it, not just because it represents continuity and tradition; they actively believe that its presence is essential to their product’s development in bottle. Other producers actively despise it, having had poor experiences with TCA (an organic chemical which naturally occurs in untreated cork) which, if not properly removed, can turn a beautiful wine into the wet dog and damp basement odour of a corked bottle. Other dangers abound: the same slow and gentle oxygenation of wine that cork affords can go too far too fast, hurtling past the desirable development of tertiary characteristics.
and straight to oxidation.

With the exception of Australia (spiritual homeland of the screwcap), natural cork remains the most preferred closure in the US, Germany and China.

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