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BI Daily

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GLOBAL TRENDS

'Come Over October' campaign fights anti-wine narrative

The 'Come Over October' campaign was first conceived by US wine journalist Karen MacNeil, together with co-founders Gino Colangelo and Kimberly Charles, in response to growing negativity in the media about safe alcohol consumption. Its aim is simple: to encourage people to gather and converse over a glass of wine (or non-alcoholic beverage) during the month of October, in the hope of not only reminding people how a glass of wine can bring people together, but also fighting loneliness, fostering connection and reigniting the art of conversation.

Wider support is growing outside of the US too with Wines of Chile, Wines of Australia, the Champagne Bureau, New Zealand Wine and Wines of South Africa also involved. Anyone can get involved in the campaign, from producers to retailers and restaurants, with free campaign assets available to download from the team's website. The key aim is for the campaign's messaging to reach consumers, which relies upon galvanising the trade to take part.

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The US Wine Market Faces an Unwelcome New Normal

For years, the US has been the world's most appealing export market. Not only were American consumers prepared to pay more, but the market kept expanding. Consumers are buying less wine and getting choosier about what they do buy, and retailers are adjusting their inventories to match.

In the first six months of 2024, as measured by the US Trade Commission, the volume of wine imports into the US increased by 1.5% from the same period in 2023. But both value and the average price declined, by 1.1% and 2.5%. Ask the experts about what's going on, and it's not unusual to get contradictory answers to the same questions.

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The Post-Covid Decline Of Wines And Spirits Sales Is Accelerating

The post-COVID decline in wine and spirits consumption appears to be accelerating. More troubling for the beverage industry is that premium-priced products, once a sales driver, are underperforming overall sales. Moreover, the latest data from the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) indicated that the current trends will likely continue for the foreseeable future.

Wine and spirits depletions—actual sales from wholesalers to over 450,000 retailers nationwide—declined 6.0% in the 12 months through August 2024. Wine sales declined by 8.0%, while spirits fell by 3.9%. Based on current data, the WSWA predicted that the negative year-over-year trend would continue for the remainder of 2024 and into 2025.

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MAJOR WINE PRODUCING COUNTRIES

Spanish Harvest Larger Than Last Year

Spain's harvest volume is significantly larger than last year's historically low yield—yet still smaller than expected.

The Spanish Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA) has released its initial estimate for the current harvest. MAPA expects wine and must production to reach around 38.1m hl, a significant increase of 17.6% compared to last year's harvest (32.4m hl). However, the 2023 harvest marked a historic low. Compared to the average of the past five years, the 2024 harvest still represents a decline of 4.7%. Until recently, experts had been forecasting a yield of about 40m hl.

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Our mailing address is:

South Africa Wine

Picardi Farm, 100 Cecilia Street

Suider-Paarl, 7646

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