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Tesco entered the auction for Majestic Wine Group, reports say

The deal could broaden Tesco’s drinks business beyond supermarkets into hospitality supply through Majestic Commercial, Enotria and Vagabond.

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Tesco is among the companies taking part in an auction for Majestic Wine Group, according to reports cited by trade publications, in a potential deal that could widen the supermarket group’s reach in Britain’s hospitality drinks market as well as its retail wine business.

The Morning Advertiser, citing Sky News, reported that Tesco is understood to be one of several bidders in a sale process launched by Majestic's owner, Fortress Investment Group. Harpers Wine & Spirit Trade News also reported that Tesco had been named among the parties competing to buy the business. No agreement has been reached, and the structure and value of any transaction remain unclear.

Neither Tesco, Majestic nor Fortress had commented on the reported process at the time the reports were published.

Majestic Wine Group includes four divisions that are understood to be part of the sale package: its retail chain, on-trade supplier Majestic Commercial, premium wine and spirits distributor Enotria, and wine bar operator Vagabond. If a sale goes ahead, Tesco would not just be buying a high-profile wine retailer. It would also be acquiring a wider drinks platform with exposure to restaurants, hotels, bars and other hospitality venues across the UK.

That is important for the beverage industry because a transaction of this kind could further concentrate parts of the British wine distribution market. It could also increase Tesco's influence as a supplier not only to shoppers in stores, but also to hospitality customers through wholesale and specialty drinks channels. Any effect would depend on the final shape of a deal and how the businesses were run afterward.

Majestic has been building that hospitality presence over the past two years. Last year, the group completed its acquisition of Enotria, a premium wines and spirits distributor, as part of a plan to expand in the on-trade, the industry term for sales to pubs, bars, restaurants and hotels. At the time, the company said Enotria and Majestic Commercial would continue to operate as standalone businesses. Enotria supplies hospitality venues across the UK.

Majestic also bought Vagabond Wines out of administration in April 2024, securing nine venues and more than 170 jobs. Since then, it has continued to invest in the wine bar business. In December 2025, Vagabond opened a 6,000-square-foot flagship urban winery and bar in the Canada Water area of London.

A takeover would add those operations to Tesco’s existing presence in hospitality distribution through Booker, the wholesaler it bought for £3.7bn in 2018. Booker has continued to expand its drinks operations since that acquisition. In June 2024, Booker bought Venus Wine & Spirits Merchants as part of a plan to grow its wholesale and hospitality business. Venus supplies more than 3,000 wines, beers, spirits and soft drinks to hospitality customers.

The reported interest in Majestic would therefore fit with a broader pattern in Tesco’s business, even though the company is still known mainly as Britain’s biggest supermarket chain. A combination of Booker’s wholesale network and Majestic’s retail, distribution and bar assets would give Tesco a larger position across several parts of the drinks market, from consumer wine sales to supply for restaurants and bars.

Fortress has owned Majestic since 2019, and reports earlier this year said the private investment group was exploring a sale. Harpers reported that the formal process began several weeks ago. The identities of other bidders have not been disclosed in the reports.

Majestic has continued to invest while the sale process has unfolded. Harpers reported that the company recently committed £4m to its store estate, including plans to open four new sites during the 2026/27 financial year. Since Fortress took control in 2019, Majestic has opened more than 25 stores across the UK, according to Harpers.

In a summer interview with Harpers, Majestic chief executive John Colley said the business was continuing to invest significantly in its growth plan. That expansion effort has covered both its store network and its push into higher-end drinks supply and hospitality.

Tesco has made only limited direct moves into hospitality under its own brand in recent years, mostly through short-term promotional events. The Morning Advertiser noted that the company temporarily took over the Castle pub in Farringdon during the King’s coronation in 2023 and opened a two-day Clubcard-themed nightclub in London in 2025. Those projects were small compared with Booker’s wholesale business, but they showed continued interest in consumer-facing hospitality activity.

For Majestic, the sale process comes after a period of reshaping the business beyond its core retail roots. The addition of Enotria brought in a premium supply operation focused on wines and spirits, while the Vagabond rescue gave the group a direct presence in experiential wine bars. Together with Majestic Commercial, those units have made the company more relevant to the wider drinks trade than a standard wine store chain.

That broader footprint may help explain buyer interest. A successful bidder would gain access to established retail customers, trade accounts in hospitality, premium distribution relationships, and a bar brand with a London flagship. For Tesco, those assets could complement its supermarket scale and Booker’s wholesale base, though any formal offer, valuation and integration plan remain unknown.