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Italy offers wine tourism groups subsidies covering up to 50% of project costs

Only consortia and other collective applicants may seek the aid by Dec. 15 for the 2026/27 program.

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Italy has opened a new round of public support for wine tourism projects, with aid covering up to 50% of eligible costs under a ministerial decree signed in Rome on October 8, according to information published by the farm group CIA Marche and by Il

Sole 24 Ore’s NT+ Fisco service.

The measure implements a national sector program for the promotion of wine tourism and is part of the broader policy framework known in Italy as the “wine package,” linked to the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy. The stated aim is to strengthen the reputation of Italian vineyards, connect wine tourism more closely with the quality and identity of producing regions, and encourage activities that can draw more visitors to wine-growing areas.

For the 2026/27 campaign, applications must be filed by December 15, a later deadline than the usual October 30 timetable cited in the decree summary. Regional authorities are expected to draw up their rankings by March 15, 2027, and approved actions must be completed in time for subsidy payments to be made by October 15, 2027.

The program is not open to individual wineries applying on their own. According to the published rules, only collective bodies can submit applications. Eligible applicants include professional organizations representing wine production, wine producer organizations and their associations, interprofessional organizations, and groups of producers managing protected designation and geographical indication schemes, including protection consortia for DOP and IGP wines.

That structure means wineries interested in joining the program will need to participate through one of those collective applicants. The applying organization must identify in its filing the participating companies, vineyards, cellars and wines to be promoted.

The maximum public contribution is set at 50% of eligible costs, although Italy’s regions can choose to impose a lower ceiling. Regional governments may also set minimum and maximum spending amounts for each application, giving them significant control over how the measure is applied locally.

The decree summary says only operations and expenses started after the application is submitted will be eligible for support. It also excludes some categories of spending, including recoverable VAT, interest charges, indirect costs and insurance expenses.

The funded actions are designed to promote wine tourism directly. CIA Marche said eligible activities include advertising and promotional campaigns focused on wine tourism, guided excursions through vineyards, winery visits with tastings, presentations of vineyards, production facilities and winemaking methods, and the organization of wine and territory-related events, fairs and exhibitions. Il Sole 24 Ore reported that the supported investments may also extend to tourism routes, hospitality structures and services intended to improve the visitor experience, suggesting that the measure is meant to support both promotion and the broader tourism offer tied to wine regions.

The decree arrives at a time when Italy’s wine sector is facing pressure from weaker consumption and trade headwinds, according to CIA Marche’s description of the policy. By directing aid toward collective promotion rather than single-firm applications, the government appears to be pushing regional and denomination-based campaigns that can market a territory as much as a bottle.

That could matter beyond tourism alone. If producer groups use the funding to bring more visitors into vineyards and cellars, the program may create a new way for wineries to diversify revenue, support direct-to-consumer sales and increase visibility for Italian wine brands in a difficult market. For the broader drinks sector, the measure could help wine producers build stronger links between agricultural output, hospitality and local retail channels, especially in regions where wine tourism supports restaurants, tasting rooms and specialty beverage sales.

The timing is important for producer groups that want to take part in the 2026/27 campaign. With the filing window now tied to a December 15 deadline, consortia and other eligible organizations have a limited period to assemble applications, define the wineries included in each project and map out the vineyards, wines and visitor activities they want to promote. Because regions retain discretion over spending limits and support rates below the 50% national maximum, the final terms may vary from one part of Italy to another.

CIA Marche said it is offering assistance to interested organizations seeking to prepare applications and interpret the rules. That reflects the technical nature of the program, which sits at the intersection of agricultural policy, tourism promotion and regional

administration.

For many wineries, especially smaller ones that cannot apply directly, participation will depend on whether a consortium, producer organization or other eligible group decides to sponsor a shared project. In practice, that may favor established collective brands and appellations with stronger administrative capacity, while also encouraging joint campaigns built around wine routes, denomination identity and regional tourism experiences.

The policy’s design suggests that Italian authorities want wine tourism to serve not only as a marketing tool but also as a territorial development strategy. By tying support to organized groups and to promotional initiatives rooted in vineyards, wineries and local wine culture, the program seeks to turn tourism into a more formal channel for supporting the wine economy during the 2026/27 cycle.