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# Inter Rhône plans a sectorwide summit to shape Rhône wine strategy through 2035

Samuel Montgermont calls the downturn structural and wants distributors, banks and local authorities at the table

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Inter Rhône, the trade body for the Rhône Valley wine industry, is preparing a broad consultation aimed at setting a strategy through 2035 after its new president said the region must adapt to what he described as a structural crisis.

Samuel Montgermont, who recently took over as president of Inter Rhône, said on Tuesday, Nov. 10, that the organization plans to move “very quickly” to hold what in France are known as états généraux, a wide-ranging sector meeting meant to bring together public and private stakeholders around a common plan. He said the goal is to “build a vision by 2035” for Rhône viticulture.

Montgermont said the process is intended to gather the chambers of agriculture, local governments, state services and banks. He also made clear that distributors will be central to the effort. “Without mass retail, we will not have contracting,” he said, arguing that the region needs the downstream market involved if it wants more stable commercial commitments.

The initiative reflects pressure building across French wine regions as producers face weak demand in some markets, changing consumption patterns, pricing pressure and broader financial strain. Montgermont said the purpose of the Rhône talks will be to identify the changes needed to restore the sector’s economic strength.

Inter Rhône’s plan is not limited to a broad political discussion. The organization also wants stronger economic analysis tools to help guide decisions on production and marketing. The stated aim is to move the sector toward greater contractualization, a term widely used in France for longer-term supply agreements between producers and buyers.

That approach could matter well beyond growers in the Rhône. If the region succeeds in getting producers, distributors and financial institutions aligned around contracts and market signals, it could help give wine suppliers more secure outlets, improve price formation and support profitability across part of the beverage supply chain. For retailers and wholesalers, more formal agreements could also bring more visibility on volumes and sourcing.

Montgermont’s comments echo recommendations already made at the national level. In October 2025, a French Senate information mission on the future of viticulture called for sector-wide meetings to obtain stronger commitments from downstream buyers through contracting tools. Lawmakers said the objective should be to move toward what they described as genuine forward price construction and longer-term security for

producers’ sales outlets.

That Senate language goes to the heart of the current debate in French wine. Many producers have argued that they carry most of the market risk while having too little influence over final pricing. A more formal contracting system is meant to reduce that imbalance by linking production, volumes and price expectations earlier in the commercial process.

For the Rhône Valley, the challenge is especially important because the region includes a wide range of producers and appellations, from large-volume wines sold through supermarkets to higher-value labels sold through specialist channels and export markets. Bringing all of those interests together will likely be difficult, particularly if the industry is expected to agree on how much to produce, how to market it and how risk should be shared.

Montgermont has also put wine tourism at the center of his roadmap. He presented oenotourism as a strategic tool for making the region more attractive and creating additional value around Rhône wines. A new stage is planned in the structuring and promotion of that offer, with more cooperation between wine and tourism professionals.

That ambition includes a project for an Institut Rhône Oenotourisme, which would be designed to coordinate initiatives, support professionals and improve the visibility of the region’s wine tourism offer. While fewer details have been made public on how the institute would operate, the proposal suggests Inter Rhône wants to diversify the ways the region generates income and strengthens consumer ties beyond bottle sales alone.

The combination of contracting and wine tourism shows that Inter Rhône is looking at both sides of the business problem: immediate economic resilience and longer-term demand. On one side, it wants better market organization and stronger guarantees for sales. On the other, it is trying to build new drivers of appeal for the region and its wines.

No date for the états généraux has yet been announced. But the message from Inter Rhône is that the process will begin quickly and that it is intended to involve actors well beyond vineyards and wineries. By bringing in banks, public authorities and distributors, the organization appears to be signaling that the Rhône wine sector’s

difficulties are no longer seen as a matter for growers alone, but as a broader economic issue that affects the region’s beverage business, local investment and commercial stability.